

**Mapping Weimar Berlin:
Representations of Space in the Feuilletons of
Joseph Roth, Gabriele Tergit and Kurt Tucholsky**

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ABSTRACT

Feuilleton articles published during the Weimar period in major Berlin newspapers captured the dynamics of the era. The contrast between pre-revolutionary Wilhelmine Berlin and the industrial modernity that characterised the Weimar capital was particularly influential for journalistic writing. *Feuilleton* items – short, subjective accounts falling between literary narrative and journalism – offered a sense of re-orientation in altered times by commenting on aspects of daily social and political life in the city. As such, *feuilletons* are inseparable from Berlin and the events unfolding there during the 1920s and early 1930s.

Drawing on the spatial turn in recent cultural studies, this thesis explores how individual *feuilleton* writers construct Weimar Berlin on the page. Its specific interest is in examining representations of space in the articles of authors and journalists Joseph Roth (1894–1939), Gabriele Tergit (1894–1982) and Kurt Tucholsky (1890–1935). They contributed to the flourishing *feuilleton* scene in the metropolitan broadsheets and journals, and their works remain significant beyond Berlin and the era of the Weimar Republic. Central to my thesis is the interdisciplinary and comparative approach to the study of their journalistic oeuvres, which foregrounds spatiality within the context of literary analysis. In particular, I illustrate how the authors' perceptions of the post-war world are articulated through the use of spatial categories. Here, Berlin is shown to be subject to individual acts of mapping as Roth, Tergit and Tucholsky explore the issues of the day via the depiction of specific types of space in the city.

Space as an analytical category is a novel, as yet unexplored, means of reading *feuilleton* articles, and it allows us to identify recurring themes or programmatic issues pursued by writers. Spatial theory, I argue, enhances our understanding of how contemporaries perceived the city and therefore their times. This in turn provides us with new, valuable knowledge of Berlin and the Weimar period.

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INTRODUCTION

This study deals with the perception and depiction of Berlin in the *feuilleton* of the 1920s and early 1930s in order to determine how individual authors structure or organise the city on the page.¹ Informed by recent theories of space in cultural studies, the project is above all interested in the aspect of spatiality² in the journalistic oeuvres of Joseph Roth (1894–1939), Gabriele Tergit (1894–1982) and Kurt Tucholsky (1890–1935). Taking a spatial approach to the study of *feuilleton* articles essentially involves foregrounding observations of space, place, and topography in the texts as a means of gaining insight into the authors' construction of Berlin. Some allude to the city's material form – in terms of specific urban geography, landmarks and real events – while others, in their attempt to understand and convey to the readership the interwar city, focus on representative urban spaces; they employ visions, comparisons and allegories, at the same time retaining at least an element of realism which readers were able to relate to. This thesis contends that the emphasis on space as a means of examining different conceptions of Berlin and the interwar period in *feuilleton* publications is as yet uncharted territory, and due investigation.

Over the past decade there has been a convergence of a variety of academic disciplines that are engaging critically with representations of the city and urban space in general. The social sciences, especially the fields of geography and urban studies, have been in the vanguard for the advancement of space as a category of analysis, stimulating interest in spatiality as a key dimension of scholarly inquiry. The so-called spatial turn promotes increased spatial thinking, a re-focus on space as a means of developing our understanding of culture and historical experience. Moreover, the spatial turn seeks to redress the imbalance caused by what the geographer Edward Soja terms 'an intrinsic privileging of time over space or history over geography'³ in

¹ Throughout this thesis I will employ the term '*feuilleton*' to denote a short account within the *Feuilleton* part of a newspaper: the literary, entertainment, and arts section.

² To define the term 'spatiality' I defer to Jennifer Marston William's elucidation of spatiality as 'both spatially oriented language and the conceptualizations that such language represents'. See Jennifer Marston William, 'Mapping a Human Geography: Spatiality in Uwe Johnson's *Mutmassungen über Jakob*', in Jaimey Fisher and Barbara Mennel (eds), *Spatial Turns: Space, Place, and Mobility in German Literary and Visual Culture* (Amsterdam and New York: Rodopi, 2010), pp. 79–102 (p. 80).

³ Edward Soja, 'Taking space personally', in Barney Warf and Santa Arias (eds), *The Spatial Turn: Interdisciplinary Perspectives* (London: Routledge, 2009), pp. 11–35 (p. 12).

the telling of human experience. Reliance on the chronological narrative of history thus makes way for greater consideration of the spatial dimension of epochal events. Another theorist who emphasises the significance of space in attempting to understand the effects of history is Karl Schlögel. He draws particular attention to the notion that every past development (and each human narrative) has a physical location, which – if studied – can help us envision how events come to pass: ‘Immer erwies sich der Ort als der angemessenste Schauplatz und Bezugsrahmen, um sich einer Epoche in ihrer ganzen Komplexheit zu vergegenwärtigen’.⁴ Contemporary scholars of the spatial turn advocate the conceptualisation of time as intertwined with space, so that the two are mutually dependent and of equal critical weighting in the interpretation of history. Literary criticism, meanwhile, has also been induced to turn towards issues relating specifically to place, space and representation.⁵ The increased interest in geographical aspects of literary works owes much to the growth in awareness of the interplay between the temporal and the spatial, and the associated concept of mobility, in literature.⁶ Space and the wider field of geography have come to be viewed as essential to the ‘unfolding of human affairs’⁷ and thus also to cultural production. What Pamela K. Gilbert refers to as the ‘geographical analysis’⁸ of novels and other literary forms allows scholars to contribute to the spatial discourse and to ‘new understandings of space and spatiality’.⁹

This thesis is principally concerned with the following three aspects: firstly, how individual authors map Berlin in specific ways. Here, I will outline the

⁴ Karl Schlögel, *Im Raume lesen wir die Zeit. Über Zivilisationsgeschichte und Geopolitik* (Frankfurt a. M.: Fischer, 2003), p. 10.

⁵ Recent scholarship that is engaging with categories of space in literature includes: Wolfgang Hallet and Birgit Neumann (eds), *Raum und Bewegung in der Literatur. Die Literaturwissenschaft und der Spatial Turn* (Bielefeld: Transcript, 2009); Reinhard Zachau (ed.), *Topography and Literature: Berlin and Modernism* (Göttingen: V & R Unipress, 2009); Fisher and Mennel (eds), *Spatial Turns*; Robert Stockhammer (ed.), *TopoGraphien der Moderne. Medien zur Repräsentation und Konstruktion von Räumen* (Munich: Fink, 2005); Magdalena Marszałek and Sylvia Sasse (eds), *Geopoetiken. Geographische Entwürfe in den Mittel- und Osteuropäischen Literaturen* (Berlin: Kadmos, 2010).

⁶ Post-colonial studies has also adopted conceptual vocabularies from the field of geography, for example: diaspora, peripheries, margins, crossing borders, agency, etc.

⁷ Barney Warf and Santa Arias, ‘Introduction: the reinsertion of space into the social sciences and humanities’, in Warf and Arias (eds), *The Spatial Turn*, pp. 1–10 (p. 1).

⁸ Pamela K. Gilbert, ‘Sex and the modern city: English Studies and the Spatial Turn’, in Warf and Arias (eds), *The Spatial Turn*, pp. 102–121 (p. 106).

⁹ Liam Kennedy and Maria Balshaw, ‘Introduction: Urban Space and Representation’, in Kennedy and Balshaw (eds), *Urban Space and Representation* (London: Pluto, 2000), pp. 1–21 (p. 4).

difference between the images of Berlin generated by studying an individual author's entire journalistic oeuvre as opposed to the more common perceptions of the city engendered for example by anthologies of Weimar *feuilleton* articles, which tend to be highly selective in their choice of texts. Secondly, I explore how the *feuilleton* constructed a particular kind of image of the times it sought to represent, and how the *feuilleton*'s focus on specific spaces endowed Berlin with an identity. Finally, the project considers the role of the *feuilleton* in helping to understand the 'new world' after the war. I argue that the depiction of Berlin and its spaces ultimately reveals contemporaries' understanding of the post-war era and the issues associated with modernity.¹⁰

Joseph Roth, Gabriele Tergit and Kurt Tucholsky are acclaimed 1920s and 1930s writers with strong links to Berlin, and they produced substantial bodies of work that include both novels and journalism. My interest in their Weimar *feuilleton* publications derives from their tendency to run the whole scale of philosophical, social, cultural and political considerations in their representation of the social realities underlying the Weimar Republic's drive for industrial progress and modernist sheen.¹¹ Roth, Tergit and Tucholsky were key figures in the production and dissemination of images of life in Berlin, composing articles for numerous prestigious and influential Berlin newspapers and journals at the time, including the *Berliner Tageblatt*, *Vossische Zeitung* and *Die Weltbühne*. The rationale for selecting *feuilletons* as primary research sources is thus based on the contention that they constitute an important cultural-historical source, and contribute significantly to our epistemology of the interwar years in Germany generally and Berlin specifically.¹² Crucially, though scholars have paid attention to numerous features of the authors' works, the aspect of space in their journalism remains almost entirely unexplored.

As a methodological approach, the use of literary analysis in combination with spatial theory in the study of the *feuilleton* is both novel and potentially enormously productive. *Feuilleton* articles are arguably particularly well suited to

¹⁰ Modernity in this sense refers to modern society in a post-traditional period, or, in the words of David Frisby, modernity is 'provisionally understood as the modes of experiencing that which is "new" in modern society'. See David Frisby, *Fragments of Modernity: Theories of Modernity in the Work of Simmel, Kracauer, and Benjamin* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1985), p. 1.

¹¹ At the same time, one must acknowledge that *feuilleton* authors were also driven by the need to sell their writings to an audience, beginning with the editor, then the readership.

¹² My *feuilletons* sources for all three authors derive from edited volumes.

a spatial reading because of their week-by-week response to their environment: the texts are anchored in the time and place they depict, as well as the everyday politics. They are connected in every respect with Berlin and the urban culture unfolding in the capital during the post-war period. Spatial and topographical references in the *feuilleton* arguably transcend mere description: they can be interpreted as a code or shorthand for the epoch. As such, *feuilletons* are an important means of apprehending the era for both readers at the time as well as current and future audiences, who are able to (retroactively) place themselves in history.

The study begins in Chapter 1 by exploring the history in German literature of the so-called 'Stadt als Text': literary representations of the city and its urban environments. This sets the scene for a thorough examination of the 1920s and early 1930s Berlin *feuilleton*. As one of the preferred literary modes that recorded impressions of life in post-war Berlin and experienced a surge in visibility and popularity at the time, the *feuilleton* will be interpreted as a type of publication that epitomises 'Stadt als Text'. Therefore, in addition to reviewing the current state of research, this chapter discusses the literary dimension of *feuilleton* articles and thus why they can be analysed as literature, not mere journalism. Chapter 1 proceeds with a discourse analysis which investigates theorisations of 'Stadt als Text' in the context of the prose novel, and identifies some of the key links between the *feuilleton* and the novel, conventionally perceived as the medium most capable of narrating the city. Next, the chapter surveys the literary devices employed by authors of urban depiction, including a brief review of the figure of the *flâneur* and his particular mode of metropolitan exploration. There follows a summary of the methodological approach that will be adopted in the interpretation of the *feuilleton*. The spatial theories that collectively have come to be known as the spatial turn will, in this thesis, be employed to illuminating effect in the analysis of *feuilleton* articles. After examining those scholars who have played or are playing a decisive role in advancing theories of space and place, the chapter considers how the discipline of literary studies is increasingly engaging with spatial thinking and concepts carried over from the social sciences. Chapter 1 concludes with a reading of Siegfried Kracauer's article 'Aus dem Fenster gesehen' (1931) as an illustration of how spatial theory can be applied to the analysis of the *feuilleton*.

Chapter 2 explores broadly the prominence of space in the Weimar *feuilleton* and why certain spaces attracted a great deal of journalistic attention in the first instance. It also investigates the *feuilletons*' creative potential: the concept of writers as creators of certain types of space. Key to this chapter is the examination of specific spaces (Gleisdreieck, Alexanderplatz, and Potsdamer Platz), how they have commonly been depicted in 1920s writings, and how these stock images have influenced perceptions of Weimar Berlin past and present. It serves as an example of how the cartography produced by the selective treatment of certain spaces differs considerably from the more complex mapping of Berlin by individual authors in their broader output.

Chapters 3, 4 and 5 form the main body of the thesis. Here, in the order of Joseph Roth, Gabriele Tergit, and Kurt Tucholsky, the chapters will, through focused comparison of their journalistic oeuvres, investigate three examples of urban portraiture and mapping by different means. Though the authors present a variety of readings of Berlin and findings differ, their works have in common the tendency to structure the city according to different types of space. As an outsider arriving in Berlin from Austria in 1920, Joseph Roth is a social observer whose *feuilleton* articles draw attention to social spaces in the metropolis. He locates poverty, politics, and socially marginalised groups and individuals, thereby revealing the human cost of war and economic catastrophe in Germany after 1918. The depictions of Berlin by Gabriele Tergit are based almost entirely on descriptive passages that highlight her status as a native inhabitant of the city. In Tergit's urban writings, Berlin is firmly situated and particularised. Kurt Tucholsky is also a local citizen but his portraits of the city, both from a distanced and more immediate perspective, pinpoint Berlin's weaknesses and, to a lesser extent, its strengths. He evokes a city dominated by political space, both at odds with Tergit's sympathetic portrayal of Berlin based on specific spaces, and Roth's social spaces. The respective writers' preoccupations result in the creation of distinct mental maps of Berlin that in turn engender new perceptions of the city and the Weimar period.¹³

¹³ My use of the term 'mental maps' here and in future references refers to the definition provided by Iris Schröder and Sabine Höhler, who regard them 'nicht als statisch [...], sondern [...] als historisch wandelbare Gebilde'. Mental maps are, in other words, flexible and subject to variation. See Iris Schröder and Sabine Höhler, 'Welt-Räume: Annäherungen an eine Geschichte der Globalität im 20. Jahrhundert', in Iris Schröder and Sabine Höhler (eds), *Welt-Räume. Geschichte, Geographie und Globalisierung seit 1900* (Frankfurt a. M.: Campus, 2005), pp. 9–50 (p. 23).

CHAPTER ONE

THE WEIMAR FEUILLETON AND DISCOURSE ANALYSIS

The metaphor 'Stadt als Text' (or 'Text der Stadt') describes a literary category in which the city forms the subject matter. Specifically, 'Stadt als Text' translates into writers' attempts to capture or come to terms with the city in all its various guises on the page, be it in prose novels, poetry, journalism or any other literary documents such as letters, sketches and diaries.¹ At the same time, the term carries within it the perception of the built environment as constituting countless 'texts' in the form of urban sign postings: inscriptions, labels, signals, commands, instructions, and not least the architectural rhetoric that renders cityscapes 'legible'.² Whilst the key scholarly discourses on urban representation, particularly the theoretical approach that lays emphasis on space as an analytical category, will surface in this chapter's discourse analysis (from 1.5), the thesis begins with an investigation into the 1920s and early 1930s *feuilleton*. After discussing its core characteristics, I outline the current state of research on the text genre, concluding that what is absent from existing scholarship is analysis of the *feuilleton* in the context of spatial theory. The chapter then considers why the *feuilleton* can be judged to exceed the parameters of journalism and be interpreted as literary writing.

The discourse analysis that follows the examination of the *feuilleton* explores broadly research pertaining to the city in literature. By arching from the literary city in the novel to urban depiction in the *feuilleton*, I seek to outline similarities between the genres, and how both have recourse to specific narrative devices to 'write the city'. These include the use of space, place and topography. Central to this chapter is the survey of the recent growth in theorisations of space in the disciplines of geography, history, and literature – collectively known as the spatial turn – and, crucially, how these provide further points of reference to and interpretive strategies for 'Stadt als Text'. Segueing from this examination, the interpretation of Siegfried Kracauer's 1931 *feuilleton*

¹ Representative works by German authors known for 'writing the city' include Heinrich Heine's *Reisebilder* of 1826-1841; Ludwig Börne's *Briefe aus Paris* (1830-1834); Rilke's *Die Aufzeichnungen des Malte Laurids Brigge* (about his impressions of Paris during his 1902-1903 stay) and Alfred Döblin's *Berlin Alexanderplatz* (1929).

² For detail on the concept of the city constituting a text, see Michel Butor's essay, 'Die Stadt als Text', transl. by Helmut Scheffel (Graz: Droschl, 1992).

article 'Aus dem Fenster gesehen' demonstrates the significance of literary analysis in a spatial context. The article, which fuses literary elements with theoretical concepts, reveals Kracauer's own use of spatial theory and, above all, exemplifies how spatial thinking enables us to exploit more fully the medium of the *feuilleton* article.

1.1 Tracing German Urban Depiction

The concept of 'Stadt als Text' has its roots in the *Städtebild*, a prose description of a town or city. The genre emerged towards the end of the eighteenth century in Germany, alongside more empirical, scientific studies or cultural-historical sketches of cities. Hermann Kähler locates one of the earliest examples of a German literary portrayal of a street scene in Georg Christoph Lichtenberg's 'Briefe aus England' (1775). Anticipating later descriptions of what is commonly conceived of as modern urban living, one of Lichtenberg's letters to a friend already makes reference to the tempo of street life and the anonymity of the large city. Kähler observes how Lichtenberg shows an awareness of urban bustle and the idea of simultaneity, and emphasises 'das eigene Erlebnis und den kurzen Moment, die Erfahrung der Großstadt als Verkehr und Gedränge, als unzusammenhängendes Nebeneinander'.³ The temporal concept of simultaneity is crucial to urban depiction and can be visualised with the aid of spatial theory, as will be demonstrated in subsequent chapters.

The city as literary topos began to truly flourish in Europe in the nineteenth century. Eckhardt Köhn highlights the 'reale Ungleichzeitigkeit der Metropolen im 19. Jahrhundert',⁴ and in particular the relative lagging behind of German *Residenzstädte* in comparison with Paris and London, genuine world cities that

³ Hermann Kähler, *Berlin – Asphalt und Licht. Die Große Stadt in der Literatur der Weimarer Republik* (Berlin: Dietz, 1986), p. 163. Lichtenberg describes, for example, the following scene in a London street: 'In der Mitte der Straße rollt Chaise hinter Chaise, Wagen hinter Wagen und Karrn hinter Karrn. Durch dieses Getöse, und das Sumsen und das Geräusch von tausenden von Zungen und Füßen, hören Sie das Geläute von Kirchentürmen, die Glocken der Postbedienten, die Orgeln, Geigen, Leyern und Tambourinen englischer Savoyaden, und das Heulen derer, die an den Ecken der Gasse unter freyem Himmel kaltes und warmes feil haben.' Georg Christoph Lichtenberg, 'An Ernst Gottfried Baldinger', in Ulrich Joost and Albrecht Schöne (eds), *Georg Christoph Lichtenberg. Briefwechsel 1765-1779*, vol. 1 (Munich: C. H. Beck, 1983), pp. 486–495 (p. 489).

⁴ Eckhardt Köhn, *Straßenrausch. Flanerie und kleine Form. Versuch zur Literaturgeschichte des Flaneurs 1830-1933* (Berlin: Das Arsenal, 1989), p. 12.

were modern in their industrial capitalism and inhabited by an increasingly powerful bourgeoisie. By contrast, industrialisation in the German states had only begun on a noticeable scale during the 1830s. Early nineteenth-century urban representations in the German language-speaking world thus more often than not observe life in Paris and London, with the author's perspective being that of a visitor. German writers studied first and foremost the artistic and political life of Paris, which resulted in 'Reisebilder' or 'Reisebriefe'. Heinrich Heine was one of the writers to issue reports from Paris during the 1840s, but had in fact published metropolitan impressions based on his time in Berlin as early as 1822. Heine's 'Briefe aus Berlin', though in stark contrast to any writings on the urban experience of Paris or London at the time, nevertheless constitute an early document of *flânerie* in German literature.⁵ Presented as an impersonal exploration of Berlin, Heine adopts what Kähler terms a 'Plauderton'⁶ to convey to the recipient of his letters – and imaginary fellow stroller – 'ein Geflecht von versteckten Pointen, Ironisierungen, pikanten Kontrastwirkungen und Anspielungen',⁷ anticipating the qualities associated with the later, twentieth-century *feuilleton* article. Heine's 'Briefe' can perhaps also be classed as proto-modernist: his first-person stroller walks among and scrutinises the crowds, and, by reading their countenance and bearing, attempts to uncover social and political developments in Prussia. The work significantly offers up a modern 'reading' of Berlin by exploration on foot, thus developing a new approach to urban semiotics. Based on the notion that appearance communicates clues about character, physiognomic observation continued to be a widespread activity among twentieth-century urban observers,⁸ including Siegfried Kracauer and Franz Hessel (more detail of whom is to follow).

⁵ The term *flâneur* is, however, not used in 'Briefe aus Berlin'. Margaret A. Rose traces Heine's use of the expression to 1841 in one of his reports from France, collected in *Lutetia. Berichte über Politik, Kunst und Volksleben. Erster Teil, XXXVII*. See p. 10, in Margaret A. Rose, 'Flaneurs and Idlers: a "panoramic" overview', in M. A. Rose (ed.), *Louis Huart, Physiologie du flâneur (1841); Albert Smith, The Natural History of the Idler upon Town (1848)* (Bielefeld: Aisthesis, 2007), pp. 1–74 (p. 10).

⁶ Kähler, p. 164.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ See Martina Lauster's discussion of the development of physiognomy as a science and the 'anatomy of observation with regard to the *flâneur*', in 'Turning Insides out: An Anatomy of Observation', in Martina Lauster, *Sketches of the Nineteenth Century: European Journalism and its Physiologies* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), pp. 173–179 (p. 174).

A further example of nineteenth-century German urban portraiture is Ernst Dronke's *Berlin* (1846), an investigative report 'über die gesellschaftlichen Verhältnisse des vormärzlichen Berlin'.⁹ In particular, Dronke's observer develops the role and viewpoint of the social physiognomist by transposing the concept of outward features being indicators of disposition to Berlin's whole metropolitan environment. He points to the totality of the city's face, its 'Aeußerlichkeit'¹⁰ [*sic*], as being revelatory, as exposing the internal life of Berlin's urban body. Dronke was one of two German authors, Friedrich Sass being the other,¹¹ who conveyed a picture of Berlin as a subversively progressive capital. Significantly, Dronke's work is a socio-spatial study of Berlin: he analyses some of the 'Unzulänglichkeiten der gegenwärtigen Verhältnisse'¹² – including the social repercussions of rapid industrialisation – by engaging with certain types of space.¹³

German observers and the journalism from the *Vormärz* era set the historical precedent for the twentieth-century tradition of writing for, and offering commentary on, the present. The rapid series of events characterising the revolutionary years 1848 / 49 in the German states called for swift responses, and journalistic writing was now the preferred literary medium for conveying the 'movements', the political change of the times. The type of literary 'correspondence' found in the newspapers signalled the arrival of a 'feuilletonistic' style and 'zugleich den fortgeschrittensten Entwurf einer experimentellen, *modernen* Schreibweise im Bereich der kleinen Prosa'.¹⁴ Eckhardt Köhn also argues that 'die in den Jahren des Vormärz einsetzenden Tendenzen zur literarischen Innovation im Bereich der kleinen Prosa [...] ihre konsequente Fortsetzung erst in der Zeit der Weimarer Republik [finden]'.¹⁵ The caesura in the development of the text genre in the second half of the nineteenth century was not without reason: the failure of 1848, and the

⁹ Köhn, p. 81.

¹⁰ Ernst Dronke, *Berlin*, 2 vols (Frankfurt a. M.: Literarische Anstalt [J. Rütten], 1846), I, 13.

¹¹ Friedrich Sass' publication *Berlin in Seiner Neuesten Zeit Und Entwicklung* appeared in the same year as Dronke's *Berlin* (1846).

¹² Dronke, I, [IV].

¹³ Dronke's examination of life in urban spaces in particular reveals the social changes ensuing in part from the economic developments wrought by industrialisation. He reports, for example, on the district known as 'Voigtland', situated outside the 'Hamburger Thor' (II, 43-53), noting how it embodies the exploitation of Berlin's poor, the victims of increased industrial modernity and a capitalist economy.

¹⁴ Köhn, p. 76.

¹⁵ Köhn, p. 10.

realisation that revolutionary activity would not effect change on a larger scale, meant that the writers and their articles from this period were quickly forgotten. Their work was dismissed as ephemera and discarded on account of its being associated with the sense of disappointment that generally clouded the view of the *Vormärz* era. This perception also fed into the German self-image as a politically inept nation, a view cemented in the 1850s and 1860s, an era that turned its back on the modernising tendencies of the 1830s and 40s and its predominant medium, that of journalism.

It was the remarkable changes wrought by Germany's unification in 1871 and Berlin's subsequent rapid geographical and population growth that led to renewed interest in, and increased literary engagement with, the city, by now a national capital with an urban profile in transition. One of Berlin's better-known reporters and authors prior to the First World War is Hans Ostwald (1873–1940) whose *Großstadt-Dokumente*, published between 1904 and 1908, offer insight into social conditions as well as the mores and public values of the time. Ostwald began recording and reporting his impressions of everyday life in Berlin in 1897 for the Social Democratic Party newspaper *Vorwärts*. Of particular interest to Ostwald were the effects of the modernisation process on the city, and he observed numerous amusement and entertainment venues, building sites, industrial quarters, and residential areas of the rich and the poor.¹⁶ The west of Berlin was shaped by spatial transformations such as the rapid development of department stores, hotels, and banks, as well as the creation of extravagant urban villas. By contrast, the deprived districts of Berlin (the proletarian north and east) were characterised by so-called *Mietskasernen*, tenement blocks that housed large numbers of people in modestly proportioned lodgings. According to Ralf Thies, Ostwald's reportage was remarkable at the time in terms of its obvious empathy for Berlin's 'proletarische[n] Großstadtgestalten'.¹⁷ He pointed out seemingly irrelevant places and greatly intrigued his contemporaries with his explorations. Ostwald's colleagues (including the journalists Paul Lindau and Paul Lindenberg) were more concerned with portraying bourgeois and upper-class social realms than with exploring the city's sub-cultures and working-class districts. On the whole,

¹⁶ See Ralf Thies, *Ethnograph des dunklen Berlin: Hans Ostwald und die "Großstadt-Dokumente" 1904-1908* (Cologne: Böhlau, 2006), p. 25.

¹⁷ Thies, p. 27.

however, Ostwald refrained from explicit social commentary, and did not regard Berlin's 'Unordnung'¹⁸ as responsible for social misery. His journalistic sketches of the city capture how increased industrialisation and the expansion of the traffic and transport network change irrevocably 'die Physiognomie Berlins',¹⁹ and, with it, the image of the city in the consciousness of authors seeking to 'write' it.

1.2 The 1920s and early 1930s Berlin Feuilleton

Germany's defeat in the First World War and the November revolution of 1918 provoked the rapid transition from Hohenzollern monarchical rule to relatively liberal republican life. The birth of the Weimar Republic gave rise to complex socio-political and cultural transformations in Germany, and Berlin went from being imperial seat to headquarters of a new democratic regime. As both a leading industrial power and an important cultural centre, Berlin was perceived as one of the most modern cities in Europe, and later invited comparisons with the United States whose industrial processes it imported.²⁰ The contrast between pre-revolutionary Berlin and the modernity that, at least in part, defined the city after the War attracted considerable journalistic attention.

Though print media had progressively shaped public consciousness since the end of the nineteenth century, the relaxation in 1918 of pre-war censorship gave rise to a more enlivened literary scene.²¹ Post-war Germany, in particular in large cities, was on the whole strongly politicised, and party-political papers, as well as the tabloid and broadsheet press, benefited considerably from times

¹⁸ Thies, p. 27.

¹⁹ Köhn, p. 102.

²⁰ After 1918, 'Fordism' came to define the modern industrial process, the term referring to an economic system based on industrial mass production. The method 'rationalised' the production process through labour division, moving assembly lines, and standardisation of parts, which lead to mass production and subsequent mass consumption. The issue of mechanisation became a frequent topic in the *feuilleton* and a number of 1920s authors engaged with the theme, including Joseph Roth, Siegfried Kracauer, Hans Kafka, and Erich Kästner.

²¹ It is worth noting, however, that the liberalisation of the press guaranteed in the Weimar constitution remained in many ways an ideal rather than a reality. Bernhard Fulda outlines how state control of print media output was common, but culminated when the state, offended by what it perceived of as progressively more lurid tabloid treatment of politics in the Republic, issued 'an emergency decree of 17 July 1931 that allowed for increasingly authoritarian state intervention in the German press in general'. See Bernhard Fulda, 'Industries of Sensationalism: German Tabloids in Weimar Germany', in Karl Christian Führer and Corey Ross (eds), *Mass Media, Culture and Society in Twentieth-Century Germany* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), pp. 183–203 (p. 197).

in flux.²² According to Bernard Fulda, 'newspaper reading was – at least quantitatively – the most popular spare-time activity and an important cornerstone of mass entertainment in this period',²³ and daily sales swelled to well over twenty million newspapers by the beginning of the 1930s.²⁴ The emergence, or *re-emergence*, of essayistic writing, reportage, and especially *feuilletonism*, in the evocation of life in Berlin can be attributed in part to the dynamics of the times. Reporting and commentary, with what Uecker terms their 'Anspruch auf Unmittelbarkeit und Authentizität',²⁵ aided the dissemination of information in an 'age of rapid transit'.²⁶ The interwar years were by and large a time of vast change, and the *feuilleton* section was granted a privileged position among the wealth of journalism available in Berlin. It became *the* vehicle to convey the socio-spatial shifts after the war, providing daily impressions of 'what life was actually like in this new Berlin'.²⁷

As one of a multitude of journalists writing about Berlin during the post-war period, Joseph Roth sums up his role as a *feuilleton* writer as follows: 'Auf einer halben Seite gültige Dinge sagen'.²⁸ His description provides both a sense of the relative brevity of the texts and the nature of their content. Attempts at defining the 1920s Berlin *feuilleton* conclusively are complicated by the broad scope of characteristics commonly ascribed to it. In addition to reviews of exhibitions, new architectural ventures, theatre plays, concerts and literary publications, *feuilletons* can, in general terms, be termed journalistic articles that take the form of short prose-essays or subjective accounts. At their core is a precise awareness of the particularities of the times being lived through. Prompted by ostensibly mundane everyday situations or political events, authors regularly weave a subtext into a narrative that holds deeper significance than the surface observation initially suggests. They tend to discuss the

²² See Klaus Westermann, *Joseph Roth, Journalist. Eine Karriere 1915-1939* (Bonn: Bouvier, 1987), p. 24.

²³ Fulda, 'Industries', in Führer and Ross (eds), *Mass Media*, p. 184.

²⁴ See Fulda, p. 183.

²⁵ Matthias Uecker, *Wirklichkeit und Literatur. Strategien Dokumentarischen Schreibens in der Weimarer Republik* (Bern: Lang, 2007), p. 351.

²⁶ Anke Gleber, *The Art of Taking a Walk: Flânerie, Literature and Film in Weimar Culture* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1999), p. 65.

²⁷ David Midgley, *Writing Weimar: Critical Realism in German Literature 1918-1933* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), p. 270.

²⁸ Joseph Roth, 'Feuilleton' in Klaus Westermann (ed.), *Joseph Roth. Werke*, vol. 1 (Cologne: Kiepenheuer & Witsch, 1989), pp. 616–619 (p. 617).

particular in order to highlight a more general, universally applicable point, and thereby endeavour to communicate 'gültige Dinge'.²⁹

Roth proves to be of further use in offering insight into the fundamental character of the *feuilleton* article when he refers to what he does as drawing 'das Gesicht der Zeit'.³⁰ The metaphor is instructive in its allusions to physiognomic examination, with the times being in possession of an exteriority – and individuality – that is capable of being consciously 'read' and rendered visible by textual means.³¹ One of the *feuilleton* articles' central properties is indeed their ability to make the transitional era more transparent and thus comprehensible to the reader. While some *feuilleton* writers observed and commented upon the wonders and hazards of modern metropolitan life, others used the medium for more serious, analytical purposes. Kurt Tucholsky, for example (one of Germany's most prolific and versatile journalists) had hoped to 'warn' as wide a readership as possible, through his journalism, of what he regarded as the nation's *non*-revolution. He attempted to raise awareness of the forces of the old order that retained their authority and influence, despite the Weimar Republic's officially representing a new, democratic set-up. Alongside his political polemics, Tucholsky, like Roth and Tergit, also reported from the criminal courts in Moabit. By incorporating their experiences into their *feuilleton* articles, they were offering comment on the social and political spirit of the era; significantly, they used the space of the courtroom to do so.

More recently, *feuilleton* publications flourished once again during the post-*Wende* years of the early to mid-1990s, and in particular at the height of Berlin's urban redevelopment. Newspapers such as the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* set up editorial divisions based in Berlin and focused on the city's contested urban restructuring as well as the socio-cultural repercussions of political change. The city's search for a marketable identity that was divorced from former incarnations – National Socialist capital and symbol of Cold War Division – involved the re-discovery of works by authors written during the Republican

²⁹ Roth, 'Feuilleton', p. 617.

³⁰ Joseph Roth, 'An Benno Reifenberg. 22. IV. 1926', in Hermann Kesten (ed.), Joseph Roth. *Briefe 1911-1939* (Cologne: Kiepenheuer & Witsch, 1970), pp. 87–89 (p. 88).

³¹ Roth's reference to the face also corresponds with the fascination during the interwar period with physiognomy, and especially with injuries of the face caused by the war. In the year 2000, the Deutsches Historisches Museum in Berlin examined this preoccupation in an exhibition titled *Das Gesicht der Weimarer Republik. Menschenbild und Bildkultur 1918–1933*.

era whose chronicles of life in Weimar Berlin enabled 'sinnfällige Vergleiche zwischen den Zeiten'.³² At the same time, 1990s *feuilleton* authors also informed the public about the 'new city' that was emerging after the fall of the Berlin Wall.³³

The intermittent success of the *feuilleton* article suggests a need on behalf of both readers and writers for a literary response to, and representation of, historical change. The pieces – articles from the Weimar era as well as from more recent periods – appear to satisfy the desire for familiarity in altered circumstances by tapping into a collective psyche and, as David Midgley argues, they 'provide vivid firsthand testimony to the trends and atmospheres of the times'.³⁴ With their communicative immediacy, *feuilleton* items also appear to benefit 'von historischen Rahmenbedingungen [...]. Die Wahrnehmung der Zeit profitiert von einem Vorher und Nachher'.³⁵ Berlin after the Great War was the capital of a country undergoing political, and socio-cultural transformation, and comparisons drawn in many *feuilleton* articles between pre-revolutionary Germany and the new age of Weimar republicanism served to relativise the present. This thesis illustrates specifically how, in *feuilleton* articles, historical events and developments are depicted in terms of spatial categories.

The better-known papers in which the authors under examination published their *feuilleton* articles were Berlin-based, with the exception of *Frankfurter Zeitung* and *Prager Tagblatt*, the latter a German-language newspaper with liberal-democratic credentials, issued in Prague between 1876 and 1939.³⁶ It published writings by Joseph Roth, Alfred Döblin, and Egon Erwin Kisch among others, and after 1933 was a vital refuge for exiled authors, including Gabriele

³² Ulrike Zitzlsperger, 'Die Bebilderung der Stadt: Berliner Feuilletons, Kolumnen und Reportagen', in Godela Weiss-Sussex and Ulrike Zitzlsperger (eds), *Berlin: Kultur und Metropole in den Zwanziger und Seit den Neunziger Jahren*, Publication of the Institute of Germanic Studies, 91 (Munich: Iudicium, 2007), pp. 78–96 (p. 80).

³³ One noteworthy *feuilleton* contributor is Alexander Osang, a writer for the *Berliner Zeitung* from East Berlin who made literary enquiries throughout the 1990s into the cultural differences between East and West Germany. He also charted Berlin's development from former *Mauerstadt* to Germany's new capital. Osang's mental map of Berlin and explanation of the contemporary mindset were in part informed by his experience of the divided city.

³⁴ Midgley, *Writing Weimar*, p. 270.

³⁵ Zitzlsperger, 'Bebilderung der Stadt', in Weiss-Sussex and Zitzlsperger (eds), *Berlin: Kultur und Metropole*, p. 82.

³⁶ For detail on the rise of print media in Germany between 1871–1939, see Corey Ross, *Media and The Making of Modern Germany: Mass Communications, Society, and Politics from the Empire to the Third Reich* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), and Peter de Mendelssohn, *Zeitungsstadt Berlin. Menschen und Mächte in der Geschichte der Deutschen Presse* (Berlin: Ullstein, 1959).

Tergit. The *Frankfurter Zeitung*, founded in 1856, employed (among others) the writers Siegfried Kracauer, Joseph Roth, Walter Benjamin, Alfred Döblin and Erich Kästner, and was renowned for its left-wing democratic, liberal slant during the period of the Weimar Republic. It later fell under the control of conservative forces and, following the rise to power of the National Socialists in January 1933, many Jewish contributors, including Siegfried Kracauer, were forced to leave.

The main metropolitan newspapers included *Berliner Tageblatt*,³⁷ *Vossische Zeitung*,³⁸ and *Berliner Börsen-Courier*.³⁹ Smaller formats whose *feuilleton* sections were held in high regard included the political paper *Vorwärts*, the periodical *Die Weltbühne*, and the illustrated weekly *Berliner Illustrierte [sic] Zeitung*. The former was the official organ of the Social Democratic Party. Kurt Tucholsky and Joseph Roth wrote for the paper, which also published excerpts from Tergit's first novel, *Käsebier erobert den Kurfürstendamm* in 1931. The *Weltbühne* and *Prager Tagblatt* provided other overtly left-orientated coverage.⁴⁰ Some of the lesser known papers and literary journals in which *feuilletons* appeared include *Münchner Neueste Nachrichten*,⁴¹ *Neue Rundschau* (Alfred Döblin), and *Das Tage-Buch* (Joseph Roth, Alfred Polgar, Walter Benjamin, Egon Erwin Kisch, and Anton Kuh).⁴²

³⁷ The *Berliner Tageblatt* was set up by the publisher Rudolf Mosse in 1872, and was the publishing house's flagship daily paper, with a morning and an evening edition. It began as a commercial venture, selling advertising space to generate revenue and later became one of Germany's most revered broadsheets. Its journalists included Gabriele Tergit, Kurt Tucholsky, Walther Kiaulehn, Fred Hildenbrandt, Alfred Kerr, and Alfred Polgar.

³⁸ The *Vossische Zeitung* was one of only two liberal papers (the other was the *Berliner Tageblatt*) with transregional influence. It was established in 1721 and printed by the publishing house Ullstein from 1914 onward.

³⁹ The *Berliner Börsen-Courier*, created in 1868, was a conservative-nationalist paper that published on business, economics, and culture. Whilst conservative in its approach to political reporting, it nevertheless included a liberal-minded cultural section that had great prestige, and to which Joseph Roth and Gabriele Tergit contributed articles during the 1920s.

⁴⁰ Among the periodicals, *Die Weltbühne* (known as *Die Schaubühne* until 1918, when it was renamed) was a highly acclaimed weekly publication focused on politics, art and business. Kurt Tucholsky was its editor for a short interval following the death of Siegfried Jacobsohn in 1926, and was one of its most prolific contributors. Other high-profile names attached to the *Weltbühne* include Gabriele Tergit, Walter Mehring, Erich Kästner, Robert Walser, Alfred Polgar, and Ernst Bloch.

⁴¹ The paper was a Catholic, pro-monarchist paper, published in Munich between 1848 and 1945. Its readership extended beyond South Germany, and though a conservative, nationalist paper, Joseph Roth contributed articles in 1929, driven by financial incentives rather than political sympathies.

⁴² In 1933 *Das Tage-Buch* was re-named *Das Neue Tage-Buch* when the editor Leopold Schwarzschild was forced to flee Germany for Paris. He published the weekly journal in exile

The 'newspaper-reading mass society'⁴³ that emerged in the Weimar period was not a homogenous group. Corey Ross remarks that 'Germany's press landscape as a whole was remarkably fragmented',⁴⁴ and almost every social class of the reading population had different requirements.⁴⁵ The partisan political papers, to which allegiance remained generally high,⁴⁶ catered for readers' respective political views (in the social-democratic *Vorwärts*, communist *Rote Fahne*,⁴⁷ and the German Nationalist paper *Berliner Lokal-Anzeiger*, among many other party newspapers). The tabloids, meanwhile, of which the *B.Z. am Mittag* and *Tempo* (Ullstein); *8-Uhr Abendblatt* (Mosse) and *Neue Berliner Zeitung* / *12-Uhr-Blatt* were the leading papers in Berlin,⁴⁸ satisfied the need for high-circulation 'digestible' news and entertainment among the working-class and petit bourgeoisie.

In general terms, the 'bourgeois' papers and periodicals in which *feuilleton* articles were issued addressed, and were read by, the educated, liberal upper classes. On the whole, the *feuilleton* section had a largely metropolitan, Berlin-based readership since 'even the large Berlin dailies [...] were rarely read outside of the capital'.⁴⁹ The liberal broadsheets featured – like the tabloids but with contrasting degrees of depth and with considerably less sensationalism – politics and business, culture and entertainment, court-room reports, sport, advertisements and local news (in Berlin, local papers providing news from individual districts were common and almost universally popular). The large dailies and prestige papers such as *Die Weltbühne* tended to be more expensive than tabloid newspapers and illustrated weeklies, and were a denser, more complex read. In the words of Ross, the readers of the *feuilleton* 'operated

until 1940.

⁴³ Gideon Reuveni, 'Reading, Advertising and Consumer Culture in the Weimar Period', in Führer and Ross (eds), *Mass Media*, pp. 204–216 (p. 205).

⁴⁴ Ross, *Media and The Making of Modern Germany*, p. 147.

⁴⁵ Ross, *Media*, pp. 141–162.

⁴⁶ Fulda, however, outlines how the party press generally was beset by difficulties in terms of amassing greater numbers of readers. These, Fulda argues, having been influenced by the greater appeal of the tabloids' alluring headlines and entertaining content, desired from their political paper 'local news and court-room news, they wanted illustrated supplements and entertaining serialized novels, "bourgeois" sports coverage [...] and many more advertisements'. See Fulda, p. 186, p. 187.

⁴⁷ The *Rote Fahne* was the party newspaper of the Communist Party (KPD). Founded in 1918 by Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg, it lasted until 1945, though it was banned after 1933 and consequently distributed underground.

⁴⁸ See generally Fulda, in Führer and Ross (eds), *Mass Media*.

⁴⁹ Ross, p. 147.

within a totally different universe'⁵⁰ to a working class readership who, while clearly not indifferent to politics, tended to favour local human-interest stories, sport and entertainment. The *feuilleton* was thus not necessarily a mass medium for the dissemination of information, and arguably addressed a particular category of reader. The views represented by contributors to the *feuilleton* resonated primarily with the more privileged classes, who had the time and the resources to read the numerous daily newspaper editions.

1.3 Feuilleton Scholarship

Because it has not always been recognised as a self-contained literary category, scholarly investigations have been slow to examine in detail the Weimar *feuilleton* out of the context of journalism and communication studies. This state of research has only recently begun to be revised, with increased critical attention being paid particularly to the crucial cultural-historical information contained within 1920s and early 1930s *feuilleton* articles.

Kai Kauffmann draws some general conclusions about the evolution of *feuilleton* scholarship in the opening chapter of his edited volume of essays, *Die lange Geschichte der kleinen Form. Beiträge zur Feuilletonforschung* (2000).⁵¹ Kauffmann surveys the attempts made at co-operation between various disciplines over the past two decades in order to advance research overall. Collective efforts by literary and journalistic studies, in conjunction with the social sciences and history, have, in his opinion, amounted to little. And whilst literary studies have taken steps towards an increased interest in the genre, Kauffmann argues that they have nevertheless failed to make the progress previously anticipated by scholars. Kauffmann attributes this in part to a lack of 'Unterstützung von Nachbardisziplinen'.⁵² Elsewhere, Kauffmann's co-editor Erhard Schütz states that, as regards *feuilleton* research, the field of literary studies 'verhält sich eher flanierend zu ihrem potentiellen Textraum denn systematisch durchkämmend'.⁵³ Pointing out the varying scholarly depth of

⁵⁰ Ross, p. 179.

⁵¹ Kai Kauffmann, 'Zur derzeitigen Situation der Feuilleton-Forschung', in Kai Kauffmann and Erhard Schütz (eds), *Die lange Geschichte der kleinen Form. Beiträge zur Feuilletonforschung* (Berlin: Weidler, 2000), pp. 10–24.

⁵² Kauffmann, 'Feuilleton-Forschung', p. 11.

⁵³ Erhard Schütz, "'Ich zeichne das Gesicht der Zeit'. Skizzen zu Feuilleton und Feuilletonforschung aus und zu der Zeit von 1918 bis 1945', in Kauffmann and Schütz (eds), *Kleine*

existing anthologies, Schütz raises the issue of the reliability of information, incorrect commentaries and lack of comprehensiveness. Given the cultural and literary significance of the writings by a great number of *feuilleton* authors, it is, according to Schütz, imperative that more research be undertaken to ensure exactitude and completeness. On the issue of the systematic analysis of existing *feuilletons*, meanwhile, Kauffmann reaches the verdict that the state of research remains 'desolat'.⁵⁴ He quotes literary scholar Almut Todorow who argues that investigations of the *feuilleton* and its history have not progressed beyond the findings made by researchers in the 1930s, 1950s and 1960s.⁵⁵ The contributors to Kauffmann's and Schütz' volume advance *feuilleton* scholarship by exploring a number of different aspects of the text genre, including its development in the *Vormärz* to *fin de siècle* years, through the Weimar period and the Third Reich to the present day, and the types of publications closely linked with, but still distinct from, the *feuilleton* article, such as 'Theaterkritik, Nachruf, Denkbild oder Essay'.⁵⁶

The neglect that *feuilleton* research has encountered over the years is arguably attributable to the sheer thematic and stylistic variety that exists within the genre. Kauffmann in fact highlights in brief how the term "genre" as applied collectively to *feuilleton* articles is a misnomer: in view of the broad parameters of *feuilleton* writings, he states that it is 'heute so gut wie unmöglich geworden, völlig unspezifisch vom Feuilleton als Genre oder gar vom Feuilletonismus als Stil zu reden'.⁵⁷ Given these debates about the boundaries of the *feuilleton*'s literary classification – and its interconnectedness with the fields of literature, journalism, history and socio-political issues – its very nature has proved to be the greatest obstacle to comprehensive study.⁵⁸

Kauffmann highlights Georg Jäger (in the late 1980s)⁵⁹ and Todorow (in the mid-1990s) as two scholars who have contributed significantly to the elevation

Form, pp. 177–188 (p. 177).

⁵⁴ Kauffmann, 'Feuilleton-Forschung', p. 12.

⁵⁵ Almut Todorow, "Wollten die Eintagsfliegen in den Rang höherer Insekten aufsteigen?" Die Feuilletonkonzeption der Frankfurter Zeitung während der Weimarer Republik im redaktionellen Selbstverständnis', in *Deutsche Vierteljahrsschrift*, 62 (1988), 697–740 (699), quoted in Kauffmann and Schütz, *Kleine Form*, p. 12.

⁵⁶ Kauffmann, 'Vorwort', in Kauffmann and Schütz (eds), *Kleine Form*, p. 8.

⁵⁷ Kauffmann, 'Feuilleton-Forschung', p. 11.

⁵⁸ Though the *feuilleton* has served many researchers of the Weimar Republic in general as a source, this has, arguably, distorted some of the more defined *feuilleton* scholarship.

⁵⁹ See Georg Jäger, 'Das Zeitungsfeuilleton als literaturwissenschaftliche Quelle. Probleme und Perspektiven seiner Erschließung', in Wolfgang Martens (ed.), *Bibliographische Probleme im*

of *feuilleton* research to a level beyond journalistic studies and into the sphere of literary analysis. Jäger was one of the first to engage with the ‘Probleme und Perspektiven der Feuilleton-Forschung’⁶⁰ and had envisioned a collaborative effort on behalf of ‘Bibliotheks-, Literatur-, Publizistik-, Geschichts- und Politikwissenschaften’⁶¹ in order to open up and expand the field of research. These disciplines have, however, failed in the past to provide the groundwork for subsequent scholarship. Todorow, on the other hand, is credited with having subjected the *feuilleton* – specifically of the *Frankfurter Zeitung* during the Weimar Republic – to a detailed analysis of its rhetorical devices as well as its literary and communicative functions.⁶²

Among the studies identified by Kauffmann as valuable additions to the inquiry into Weimar *feuilletons* is Michael Bienert’s 1992 publication *Die eingebildete Metropole. Berlin im Feuilleton der Weimarer Republik*.⁶³ The text is notable for its inclusion of *feuilleton* articles that were at the time rarely acknowledged in scholarship (writings by Franz Hessel, Siegfried Kracauer and Joseph Roth) and constitutes an important starting point for the exploration of urban depiction within the text genre. The chapters are arranged as case studies of the themes that dominated the era (among them technology, speed, hardship, and crisis). Bienert provides a literary history of the ‘city as text’, and reveals how perceptions of Berlin, both in former days and in the present, were shaped and influenced by Weimar *feuilleton* articles, reportage, essays, and films. His book was an important step towards an understanding of the cultural-historical importance of *feuilleton* articles; at the same time, however, the approach of arranging texts according to specific themes – adopted by most subsequent anthologies – has the effect of reinforcing stock images associated with these themes.⁶⁴

Though not included by Kauffmann, Eckhardt Köhn’s analysis in 1989 of the so-called ‘kleine Form’⁶⁵ in connection with the *flâneur* proves useful, in

Zeichen eines erweiterten Literaturbegriffs (Weinheim: VCH, 1988), pp. 53–71.

⁶⁰ Kauffmann, ‘Feuilleton-Forschung’, p. 11.

⁶¹ Ibid.

⁶² See Almut Todorow, *Das Feuilleton der Frankfurter Zeitung in der Weimarer Republik. Zur Grundlegung einer rhetorischen Medienforschung*, Rhetorik-Forschungen, vol. 8 (Tübingen: Max Niemeyer, 1996), pp. 9–56.

⁶³ Michael Bienert, *Die eingebildete Metropole. Berlin im Feuilleton der Weimarer Republik* (Stuttgart: Metzler, 1992).

⁶⁴ This aspect will be examined more closely in Chapter 2.

⁶⁵ Köhn, p. 7.

particular the association between the *feuilleton* and urban depiction. Köhn's findings will be discussed in greater detail in the current chapter's discourse analysis. In more recent times Ulrike Zitzlsperger has compared *feuilleton* publications of the 1920s with those of the 1990s, discussing the ways in which authors from the respective eras contributed to the perceptions of Berlin at the time. Zitzlsperger terms *feuilletons* 'Spiegel ihrer Entstehungszeit',⁶⁶ and refers to the re-discovery and reissuing of edited volumes of articles by Tergit and Roth in the 1990s – and the success of anthologies of Weimar publications in general⁶⁷ – as indicative of their importance in providing 'ein Zeitbild'⁶⁸ and points of comparison between historical eras. Matthias Uecker's study *Wirklichkeit und Literatur. Strategien Dokumentarischen Schreibens in der Weimarer Republik*,⁶⁹ though not specifically an investigation of the *feuilleton*, nevertheless explores the attempts by authors in the Weimar Republic to mirror reality by adopting journalistic and photographic-style representations. Uecker investigates the correlation between reportage and the *feuilleton*, using Egon Erwin Kisch and Joseph Roth as case studies for differentiating between the respective text forms.⁷⁰ The *feuilleton*, Uecker argues, veers between journalism and literature. He regards Joseph Roth as characteristic of the increased tendency by writers in the 1920s and early 1930s to document 'die sichtbare Welt'⁷¹ by means of literary journalism. Roth's *feuilletons*, Uecker argues, often seek to transform 'an sich bedeutungslose[n] Tatsachen und Zahlen'⁷² into insights that hold more personal meaning. In other words, Roth makes reference to empirical data and concrete circumstances but more often than not weaves observations of these into a literary narrative. He builds atmospheres, which Uecker terms the 'Transfer vom Journalismus ins Literarische'.⁷³

⁶⁶ Zitzlsperger, 'Bebildung der Stadt', in Weiss-Sussex and Zitzlsperger (eds), *Berlin: Kultur und Metropole*, p. 80.

⁶⁷ See, for example, Jens Brüning (ed.), Gabriele Tergit. *Atem einer anderen Welt. Berliner Reportagen* (Frankfurt a. M.: Suhrkamp, 1994), Michael Bienert (ed.), *Joseph Roth in Berlin. Ein Lesebuch für Spaziergänger* (Cologne: Kiepenheuer & Witsch, 1996, repr. 2003); Christian Jäger and Erhard Schütz, *Glänzender Asphalt. Berlin im Feuilleton der Weimarer Republik* (Berlin: Fannei & Walz, 1994).

⁶⁸ Zitzlsperger, 'Bebildung der Stadt', p. 80.

⁶⁹ Matthias Uecker, *Wirklichkeit und Literatur. Strategien Dokumentarischen Schreibens in der Weimarer Republik* (Bern: Peter Lang, 2007).

⁷⁰ See Uecker, pp. 361–375.

⁷¹ Uecker, p. 364.

⁷² Uecker, p. 363.

⁷³ Ibid.

Barbara Wildenhahn's 2008 study of the *Feuilleton zwischen den Kriegen*,⁷⁴ whilst not concerned with the literary interpretation of *feuilleton* articles, ought to nevertheless be considered an important addition to *feuilleton* research overall. In her introductory chapter, Wildenhahn charts some of the issues that have prevented thorough examination of the *feuilleton*, among them the 'Übermacht des Materials und der Kraftanstrengung, die seine Erschließung im größeren Umfang [...] bedeutet'.⁷⁵ At the same time, she points to the number of academic disciplines that are at present making the *feuilleton* the focus of their respective research, among them history, literary and cultural studies, and media science. Wildenhahn states that her own publication builds on Todorow's study, the latter's 'diskursanalytischer Ansatz betont den kommunikativen Charakter des Zeitungsganzen zwischen Produktion und Rezeption'.⁷⁶ Wildenhahn explores further the language, form, and style of the *feuilleton* in the context of the media in which it appeared.

Two scholars instrumental in advancing the investigation of the *feuilleton* are Christian Jäger and Erhard Schütz. Their comparative study *Städtebilder zwischen Literatur und Journalismus. Wien, Berlin und das Feuilleton der Weimarer Republik* analyses articles published during the interwar years in Berlin and Vienna in order to reveal how particular images or clichés of the cities (Vienna as a 'geschwollener Wasserkopf'⁷⁷ after the post-war disintegration of the *Donaumonarchie*; Berlin and the Roaring Twenties) are either confirmed or contradicted by the *feuilleton*. What is noteworthy about the approach taken by Jäger and Schütz is the wealth of previously unexplored material under review. In their own words, the study 'erschließt einen Fundus von Texten, der für vergleichbare kulturhistorische Untersuchungen zum Feuilleton der Weimarer Republik in diesem Umfang bisher noch nie herangezogen wurde'.⁷⁸ In their introduction, they highlight the fact that examinations of the *feuilleton* have long remained the preserve of journalistic studies. This is due in part to *feuilleton* articles having been regarded as 'mere' journalism and thus ephemeral, whilst the *feuilletons'* informative value in

⁷⁴ Barbara Wildenhahn, *Feuilleton zwischen den Kriegen. Die Form der Kritik und ihre Theorie* (Munich: Fink, 2008).

⁷⁵ Wildenhahn, p. 27.

⁷⁶ Wildenhahn, p. 32.

⁷⁷ Karl Brockhausen, 'Das neue Österreich', in *Vossische Zeitung* 02. 11. 1924, quoted in Jäger and Schütz, *Städtebilder*, p. 29.

⁷⁸ Jäger and Schütz, *Städtebilder*, p. 15.

social-cultural and historical terms has, to a considerable degree, been overlooked. Jäger and Schütz ascribe the recent increase in scholarly engagement with *feuilleton* publications to precisely this ‘historische(n) Aussagekraft dieser Texte’⁷⁹ and assert the vital contribution they make to our current understanding of interwar Germany. Indeed, they regard Weimar *feuilletons* as a ‘kulturhistorische Quelle ersten Ranges’.⁸⁰ These texts, they argue, held a key position in the media landscape at the time in the absence of other competing news vehicles (i.e. radio and television, both then in their early stages of development): ‘Wer sich über aktuelle Ereignisse informieren wollte, war auf dieses Medium angewiesen’.⁸¹ The *feuilleton*, according to Jäger and Schütz, was increasingly perceived as a cultural institution in its own right; their publication discusses the meta-discourses that filled the pages of the Weimar *feuilleton*, and how these articles, in their day-to-day portrayal of ‘reality’, in fact also helped create this very reality. The findings of Jäger and Schütz provide valuable insights into the self-perceptions of *feuilleton* writers at the time, drawing attention to the close relationship between journalism and literature in the 1920s and early 1930s.

So, although research has in recent years begun to analyse in greater depth the wealth of *feuilleton* writings published during the interwar period, there remains a great deal of scope for further research. This project endeavours to correct in part the deficit in *feuilleton* scholarship identified above by pursuing investigations pertaining specifically to the depiction of Berlin in the works of a range of eminent authors through the lens of space. Taking into account existing research on the *feuilleton* writings of the individual writers, as well as the studies previously highlighted, I will – on the basis of the complete *feuilleton* oeuvres of Joseph Roth, Gabriele Tergit, and Kurt Tucholsky – examine the authors’ constructions of Weimar Berlin. Above all, I aim to demonstrate how they employ space to articulate their perceptions of Berlin and the post-war era, and the concerns connected with it. The issue of spatiality in *feuilleton* articles, and how a focus on space aids our understanding of the period, remains unexplored in scholarship to date.

⁷⁹ Jäger and Schütz, *Städtebilder*, p. 11.

⁸⁰ Jäger and Schütz, *Städtebilder*, p. 9.

⁸¹ Jäger and Schütz, *Städtebilder*, p. 10.

1.4 Feuilleton: journalism or literature?

I shall engage critically with *feuilleton* articles as literature and interrogate them in terms of both their literary and spatial dimension. This sub-chapter, then, aims to highlight similarities between *feuilleton* authors' approach to their journalistic writing and their prose novels, and thus why *feuilleton* articles should be construed as literary documents.

The *feuilleton*, be it of the *Vormärz*, Weimar period and of more recent times, escapes the label of 'conventional' reporting, or 'typical' journalism, a profession with a considerable history of being maligned by German intellectuals. Matthias Uecker remarks: 'Regelmäßig wurden sie [journalists - FM], seit es den Berufsstand gibt, zur Zielscheibe von Spott und Denunziationen'.⁸² Journalism in the traditional mould was commonly regarded as a poorly paid and rather deceitful occupation, and the news suspected of being manipulated and doctrinaire. This perception is also reflected in the novelistic portrayals of journalism published during the 1920s and early 1930s: Erich Kästner's novel *Fabian* and Gabriele Tergit's *Käsebier erobert den Kurfürstendamm*, both published in 1931, were set in the morally dubious milieu of newspaper publishing. Uecker notes: 'Es ist kein Zufall, daß fast alle negativen Beschreibungen journalistischer Arbeit von Autoren mit eigener Arbeitserfahrung im Feld der Presse und Öffentlichkeitsarbeit stammen'.⁸³ The *feuilleton*, on the other hand, was generally understood to be of a high quality, allowing authors to write on topics of choice, which in turn afforded them freedom to express 'Wahrheiten, die an anderer Stelle in den Zeitungen niemand auszusprechen wagt'.⁸⁴

A common attribute of Weimar *feuilleton* articles is the method of combining a literary with a journalistic approach. The distinction between journalism and literature is, however, difficult to draw (then as now) in view of the numerous shared linguistic elements, the heterogeneity of texts, and the phenomenon of novelists writing for newspapers and journalists at times also authoring books. As Kähler observes: 'Die Grenzen zwischen Schriftsteller, Publizist und Kritiker

⁸² Uecker, p. 141.

⁸³ Uecker, p. 144.

⁸⁴ Gunter Reus, 'Ironie als Widerstand. Heinrich Heines frühe Feuilletons "Briefe aus Berlin" und ihre Bedeutung für den modernen Journalismus', in Bernd Blöbaum and Stefan Neuhaus (eds), *Literatur und Journalismus. Theorie, Kontexte, Fallstudien* (Wiesbaden: Westdeutscher Verlag, 2003), pp. 159–172 (p. 163).

sind in dieser Zeit oftmals kaum zu ziehen'.⁸⁵ Broadly speaking, a journalist's role involves reporting on daily events, which are by definition transient. Writers, in turn, fictionalise life; they create virtual realities, which they publish in book format. *Feuilleton* articles can be seen to be a fusion of the two occupations, and their position on the borderline between literature and journalism appears beyond dispute among scholars of the text genre: articles that merge everyday observations with grander reflections upon life are said to be characterised by 'deutliche Kennzeichen des Literarischen. Gleichwohl haben auch sie durch den Alltagsbezug eine Tradition im Journalismus begründet'.⁸⁶ Kauffmann, though rejecting the term 'genre', nevertheless classifies 'das Feuilleton als ein literarisch-publizistisches Textgenre',⁸⁷ and thereby confirms the dual – literary and journalistic – nature of *feuilleton* writings.

Jäger and Schütz draw attention to the self-reflexive discussions in the *feuilletons* of the 1920s and early 1930s, which grant insight into the 'Selbstwahrnehmung des Feuilletons'.⁸⁸ Two issues that recurred regularly were the differing opinions regarding the status of journalism as a whole and, perhaps more importantly, the question of whether journalists could be considered to inhabit the same plane as *Dichter*: poets and writers of literature (with the implicit accent on 'high' literature).⁸⁹ This discussion took on greater dimensions during the course of the 1920s, when the value accorded to the profession underwent subtle change. In the post-war period, entrenched perceptions of 'high' and 'low' culture gradually weakened as many writers, in need of a steady, reliable income during times of economic fluctuation, found additional employment as commentators, reporters and essayists for Berlin's many daily newspapers. Journalists turned their own fate – the necessity of continually renegotiating their salaries in the face of galloping inflation – into *feuilleton* 'material'. In other words, they wrote about topical issues to which thousands of readers were able to relate. The public's need to see their own

⁸⁵ Kähler, p. 52.

⁸⁶ Reus, p. 162.

⁸⁷ Kauffmann, 'Feuilleton-Forschung', p. 12

⁸⁸ Jäger and Schütz, *Städtebilder*, p. 237.

⁸⁹ Jürgen Heizmann examines in brief the debate that took place among literary figures about the relationship between literature and journalism during the Weimar period. See Jürgen Heizmann, 'Symbolik und Raum in Joseph Roths Industriereportagen', in Thomas Eicher (ed.), *Joseph Roth und die Reportage* (Heidelberg: Mattes, 2010), pp. 151–168 (pp. 151–154).

lives reflected in the press raised the esteem in which journalists were held: they effectively universalised the suffering caused by vanished savings and loss of social status, by illustrating the human disaster rather than reporting dry facts.⁹⁰ This in turn resulted in a growing self-confidence on the part of journalistic writers and their ability to project experiences that were current, authoritative and recognisable to the majority of readers: 'Sie [journalists] scheinen schließlich die einzigen zu sein, die ein adäquates Bild zu geben vermögen'.⁹¹ In addition to this social function, journalists, and in particular *feuilleton* articles, were judged to be ideally suited to the task of elucidating for the urban newspaper reader the 'Schwankungen und Veränderungen',⁹² that defined everyday life in the modern city. The *feuilleton* texts captured its protean and diverse nature using vignettes, sketches, and fragmented urban 'snapshots', as well as detailed descriptions of conversations overheard in cafés or restaurants.⁹³ Journalistic work was re-evaluated on the basis of this and, as Kähler highlights, 'die Literatur wurde als eine Form der Alltagskommunikation behandelt. Und, das gehört umgekehrt dazu, Formen der Alltagskommunikation wurden Literatur'.⁹⁴

The issue of the relationship between the journalist's profession and that of the writer came to the fore intermittently. Debates circled around the perceived existence of a clear defining line between the two. What precluded journalism from being anything other than 'mere' reporting was, in the eyes of its detractors, the *feuilleton's* apparent transience, as opposed to the longevity of poetry and literature:

Dichtung und Feuilleton widmen und definieren sich über unterschiedliche Zeitdimensionen; diesem gehört der Tag, für den es geschrieben ist, jener die Zukunft, an die sie adressiert ist.⁹⁵

This temporal distinction – the *feuilleton* addressed issues of the day whilst authors of literature or poetry were thought to deal with more eternal,

⁹⁰ Other factors that contributed towards creating this new climate of acknowledgment of journalism included the less draconian censorship laws, the rise of photography, increased leisure time, interest in being involved in democratic processes, and easily available newspapers.

⁹¹ Jäger and Schütz, *Städtebilder*, p. 245.

⁹² Peter Fritzsche, *Als Berlin zur Weltstadt wurde. Presse, Leser und die Inszenierung des Lebens* (Berlin: Osburg, 2008). p. 143.

⁹³ See Fritzsche, *Als Berlin zur Weltstadt wurde*, p. 151.

⁹⁴ Kähler, p. 56.

⁹⁵ Jäger and Schütz, *Städtebilder*, p. 256.

universally applicable themes – was dismissed by Joseph Roth, both writer of journalism *and* prose novels. He rejected the notion that enduring meaning and importance were the preserve of authors of literature, and that only novels succeeded in transcending the boundaries of time. Indeed, Roth might be termed a prime example of a writer whose *feuilleton* articles – characterised by thematic diversity and the ability to convey impressions in highly personal and subjective terms – defy definitive categorisation in terms of their literary or journalistic nature. Whilst Roth's *feuilletons* exhibit the topicality and 'Wirklichkeitsbezug'⁹⁶ of conventional reporting, research agrees on the literary dimension to his work. Roth's fusion of narrative and reporting techniques is characteristic of his oeuvre, a synthesis of styles that Schütz refers to as 'literarische Reportage'.⁹⁷ According to Uecker, Roth transforms subjective impressions into 'literarische Erzählungen'.⁹⁸ A certain amount of Roth's prose had originally been conceived in journalistic format, signifying that he did not regard the two genres as distinctly separate. A comparative reading of Roth's 1920 article 'Bei den Heimatlosen' and passages from his novel *Hotel Savoy* (1924), as well as of the *feuilleton* 'Die Toten ohne Namen' from 1923 and the book *Rechts und Links* (1929), reveals both the thematic and stylistic similarities between Roth's journalism from the early 1920s and subsequent essayistic and prose work.⁹⁹ Rather than considering his journalism as secondary to his prose – indeed, until 1926 Roth identified himself first and foremost as a journalist – he defended the often maligned transition from journalist to prose novelist by participating in a literary dispute that questioned whether reporters or writers of *feuilletons* attained 'literariness' through the act of authoring books. In his article 'Einbruch der Journalisten in die Nachwelt',¹⁰⁰ published within the *feuilleton* pages of the *Frankfurter Zeitung* in 1925, Roth attacks those 'Dichter, die

⁹⁶ Uecker, p. 364.

⁹⁷ Schütz, 'Ich zeichne das Gesicht der Zeit', in Kauffmann and Schütz (eds), *Kleine Form*, pp. 177–188 (p. 182).

⁹⁸ Uecker, p. 364.

⁹⁹ To compare passages, see 'Bei den Heimatlosen', in Roth, *Werke*, vol. 1, pp. 373–377 (p. 375), and *Hotel Savoy*, in Fritz Hackert (ed.), *Joseph Roth. Werke*, vol. 4. (Cologne: Kiepenheuer & Witsch, 1989), pp. 147–242 (p. 202). Both describe the enforced wandering by Eastern European Jews and the homeless population in Berlin. Meanwhile, 'Die Toten ohne Namen', in Roth, *Werke*, vol. 1, pp. 914–916 (p. 914, p. 915), and *Rechts und Links*, in Roth, *Werke*, vol. 4, pp. 609–772 (p. 677, p. 678) provide near-indistinguishable depictions of the many unknown dead people recovered in Berlin during the 1920s.

¹⁰⁰ Joseph Roth, 'Einbruch der Journalisten in die Nachwelt', in Klaus Westermann (ed.), *Joseph Roth. Werke*, vol. 2 (Cologne: Kiepenheuer & Witsch, 1990), pp. 519–521.

gleichsam schon von Geburt eingebunden waren, [...] manchmal eine genaue Grenze zwischen Journalismus und Literatur [zu] ziehen'.¹⁰¹ He refers self-deprecatingly to journalists as 'Eintagsfliegen',¹⁰² an allusion to the *feuilletons*' focus on daily events. Roth continues by making the point that *Dichter* seem to reserve for themselves the right to address posterity over the "*Tagesschriftsteller*",¹⁰³ [original italics]. Roth dismisses the notion of 'writing for the day' and the insinuation that it disqualifies the journalist's work from possessing lasting significance. He in fact argues in support of the journalist's greater genius. Referring to the topicality of the *feuilleton*, he writes: 'Das Genie ist nicht weltabgewandt, sondern ihr zugewandt. Es ist nicht zeitfremd, sondern zeitnahe. Es erobert das Jahrtausend, weil es so ausgezeichnet das Jahrzehnt beherrscht.'¹⁰⁴ In a letter written and published in 1926 to the then editor of the *Frankfurter Zeitung*, Benno Reifenberg, Roth insists on the *feuilleton* writer's equal, if not superior, ability to capture with greater acuity and precision concerns of the contemporary age. He is emphatic in his confident self-perception: 'Ich bin ein Journalist, kein Berichterstatter, ich bin ein Schriftsteller, kein Leitartikelschreiber'.¹⁰⁵

Joseph Roth was not the only writer to defend the reputation of journalism as a profession. Kurt Tucholsky also dealt with the topic of *feuilleton* writing within his own articles, dismissing the disparaging attitude often displayed towards the text genre by *Dichter* or novelists. An example of Tucholsky's writing in its defence is his article 'Schwarz auf Weiß',¹⁰⁶ (1929), which reviews an anthology of *feuilleton* articles by the Austrian writer Alfred Polgar. Tucholsky's assessment is in essence a reflection upon the perceived – in his eyes fallacious – ease of writing *feuilleton* items. Schütz and Jäger note some of the prejudicial attitudes directed at journalists at the time:

Dem Journalisten ist – im unausgesprochenen Gegensatz zum Dichter – keinerlei Originalität vonnöten, seine Artikel können aus diversen, fertigen und fremden Materialien zusammengeklebt

¹⁰¹ Roth, 'Einbruch', p. 519.

¹⁰² Ibid.

¹⁰³ Roth, 'Einbruch', p. 519.

¹⁰⁴ Roth, 'Einbruch', p. 519, p. 520.

¹⁰⁵ Roth, 'An Benno Reifenberg', p. 88.

¹⁰⁶ Kurt Tucholsky, 'Schwarz auf Weiß', in Mary Gerold-Tucholsky and Fritz J. Raddatz (eds), *Kurt Tucholsky. Gesammelte Werke in 10 Bänden*, vol. 7 (Reinbek bei Hamburg: Rowohlt, 1975), pp. 49–51. All further references to this edition will be abbreviated to GW, followed by the volume and page number.

werden. Weder für die Produktion noch für die Konsumption der Artikel oder Berichte wird mit Notwendigkeit das Gehirn eingesetzt.¹⁰⁷

Tucholsky dismisses precisely this belief in his 'Schwarz auf Weiß'. Using the idiomatic phrase "aus dem Ärmel schütteln"¹⁰⁸ to refer to the allegedly effortless process of composing a *feuilleton*, Tucholsky swiftly discredits this idea: 'geschüttelt wird hier nicht: wir wollen arbeiten'.¹⁰⁹ He stresses the exertion it requires on the part of the journalist to create an item of high quality, the task analogous to a handicraft. Raw materials are transformed into the finished 'article', and the hard work that this entails is obscured by the effectiveness of the *feuilleton*.¹¹⁰ The piece, 'wenn es nachher fertig ist, dann ist es doch unbegreiflich und überraschend'.¹¹¹

Tucholsky was, like Roth, greatly concerned with language and its correct and imaginative usage. Referring to Polgar's anthology he writes:

Was ich an diesem Mann neben der untadligen [*sic*] Reinheit der Gesinnung und dem Takt des Herzens so liebe, ist eben, daß er "gut schreibt" – [...], durch alle Regeln der Grammatik mühelos schlüpfendes Deutsch schreibt.¹¹²

Further, Tucholsky praises Polgar's style, and contrasts the compactness of his publication with the length of the novel, which, for all its added pages, has no greater claim to inherent superiority:

Das wahre Kennzeichen eines guten Stils ist seine Gedrungenheit – es kann einer breit schreiben, aber er soll nicht auswalzen – die Kürze ist nicht nur die Würze des Witzes, sie ist die Würze jedes guten Stils. Auch ein Roman von sechshundert Seiten kann kurz sein.¹¹³

At the same time, Tucholsky's oeuvre contains a number of (frequently critical) articles that focus on the general issue of journalism as a profession. They deal

¹⁰⁷ Jäger and Schütz, *Städtebilder*, p. 240.

¹⁰⁸ Tucholsky, 'Schwarz auf Weiß', p. 49.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid.

¹¹⁰ In Gabriele Tergit's 1931 novel *Käsebier erobert den Kurfürstendamm* she also describes the process of perfecting the art of writing an effective *feuilleton* article. Modelling the characters on herself and her then journalist colleague Walther Kiaulehn, Tergit depicts how the characters Kohler (Tergit) and Gohlisch (Kiaulehn) present the *feuilleton* editor with their work, which he proceeds to correct: 'Er strich, er stellte um, er setzte Interpunktionen, er rückte einen Gedanken zurecht, er hob ihn aus der Wirrnis des Dunkelgefühlen in die Klarheit einer lichtvollen Prosa, und so wurde aus dem Artikel der treuen Schüler Gohlisch und Kohler erst das, was sie waren. Ein guter Gohlisch, ein guter Kohler.' See Gabriele Tergit, *Käsebier erobert den Kurfürstendamm* (Berlin: Das Neue Berlin, 2004), p. 224.

¹¹¹ Tucholsky, 'Schwarz auf Weiß', p. 51.

¹¹² Tucholsky, 'Schwarz auf Weiß', p. 49.

¹¹³ Tucholsky, 'Schwarz auf Weiß', p. 50.

with the concerns he had about, among other things, the neglect of new journalistic talent in Germany in the late 1920s and the casualness with which some people believed they could earn additional income in troubled times by simply ‘becoming’ a journalist.¹¹⁴ Tucholsky terms his trade a vocation, not intended for dilettantes: ‘Man wird Journalist durch innere Berufung, weil man es werden muss’.¹¹⁵ Elsewhere, he critiques the ‘schauderhaften Stil’¹¹⁶ he observed in much of the journalism of the times, including *feuilletonistic* writing. Tucholsky’s article ‘Rezept des Feuilletonisten’¹¹⁷ from 1922 offers a satirical ‘recipe’ for how to be a *feuilleton* author, especially of travel reports. The piece identifies and mocks a particular approach to *feuilleton* writing and what Tucholsky views as the self-stylisation of some journalists:

Fürs erste: Du mußt protzen mit allem, was es gibt, und mit allem, was es nicht gibt: mit Landschaften, Frauen, Getränken, teuern Sachen aller Kaliber, noch einmal mit Frauen, mit Autos, Briefen, Reisen und der Kraft der andern, die du müde kennst.¹¹⁸

Tucholsky’s article suggests that there exists a distinct *feuilleton* style that is adopted by some journalists to conjure, through contrived language, a specific image. He ridicules the self-importance he perceives in some types of travel article, especially the penchant for literary pretentiousness:

“Man legt müde den weißen Bademantel” – (man! Man ist wichtig!) – “den weißen Bademantel ab, winkt dem groom, er solle einmal zum bar-keeper herübergehen, ob jenes gewisse Pumamädchen geschrieben habe. Der Himmel blickt kopenhagenblau durchs Milchfenster – eine leuchtende Erinnerung an Heluan. [...] Draußen bellen die Hunde. Nicht so sanft wie die in Algerien – nicht so glockentief wie die in Calafat, wo man, träge an der Donau entlanglummelnd, Serbiens Ufer grüßte.”¹¹⁹

Tucholsky attacks the pseudo-worldly informed attitude, and asks the reader to ‘read between the lines’: ‘wenn du näher hinsiehst, ist er ineladen, nicht uffjefordert, das Ganze spielt zwischen Koblenz und Köln’.¹²⁰ In this context, Tucholsky’s use of the Berlinisch dialect, a down-to-earth vernacular, highlights a larger point about the use of language in journalism. By making some of its

¹¹⁴ See Kurt Tucholsky, ‘Journalistischer Nachwuchs’, in Tucholsky, *GW*, vol. 6, pp. 13–16.

¹¹⁵ Tucholsky, ‘Journalistischer Nachwuchs’, p. 14.

¹¹⁶ Kurt Tucholsky, ‘Die Essayisten’, in Tucholsky, *GW*, vol. 9, pp. 190–195 (p. 191).

¹¹⁷ Kurt Tucholsky, ‘Rezept des Feuilletonisten’, in Tucholsky, *GW*, vol. 3, p. 270.

¹¹⁸ Tucholsky, ‘Rezept des Feuilletonisten’, p. 270.

¹¹⁹ Ibid.

¹²⁰ Tucholsky, ‘Rezept des Feuilletonisten’, p. 270.

more hackneyed stylistic characteristics into the subject of his article, its self-reflectivity and the pejorative sense of the title in fact serve to elevate the quality of Tucholsky's own literary production. The enduring popularity of both his and Roth's collected works is perhaps the most eloquent testament to their longevity and literary merit.

1.5 Discourse Analysis: The Literary City

In 1965 the architectural critic Alexander Mitscherlich published the essay 'Die Unwirtlichkeit unserer Städte' in which he discusses the consequences of the building developments taking shape in war-damaged West German towns and cities in the 1960s.¹²¹ Engaging the interest of architects, sociologists, and literary scientists alike, Mitscherlich's text addresses the politics behind post-war urban planning and the change (for the worse, in his opinion) in relationship between town and resident. He terms the emerging towns 'unwirtlich', or inhospitable, in view of their inhumane architecture. The constructions, the result of 'Stadtverwüstung und Landzerstörung',¹²² foster anonymity and uniformity rather than meaningful social interaction and a sense of shared citizenship. Mitscherlich's essay was responsible in part for triggering renewed academic interest in the city in literature,¹²³ and in the late 1960s the literary analyst Volker Klotz published *Die erzählte Stadt*. Klotz' book remains one of the most frequently cited works on the topic of the literary city to this day, and in turn generated subsequent research in the 1970s and 1980s of texts about or situated in an urban milieu. Klotz's study investigates the relationship between the novel and the city. His publication is instructive in the first instance for the discussion in general terms of the novel as a literary genre and the particularities of the *Stadtroman* or *Großstadtroman*, in which:

¹²¹ Mitscherlich's essay was also a response to other critical writings on the topic of urban construction in Germany after the Second World War, in particular in Berlin. See, for example, Wolf Jobst Siedler who, with Elisabeth Niggemeyer and Gina Angreß, published *Die gemordete Stadt: Abgesang auf Putte und Straße, Platz und Baum* (Berlin: Herbig, 1964), which accused German post-war urban planning policies of being destructive and out of touch with a human scale.

¹²² Alexander Mitscherlich, *Die Unwirtlichkeit unserer Städte. Anstiftung zum Unfrieden* (Frankfurt a. M.: Suhrkamp, 1965, repr. 2008), p. 11.

¹²³ The literary theorist Klaus R. Scherpe makes allusion to Mitscherlich's essay in the title of his publication *Die Unwirklichkeit der Städte: Großstadtdarstellungen zwischen Moderne und Postmoderne* (Reinbek bei Hamburg: Rowohlt, 1988).

die Stadt mehr [ist], als ein Schauplatz, wo irgendein Geschehen dauernd oder zeitweilig sich abspielt; und sie ist mehr als eine gesellschaftliche Macht neben andern [sic], die auf die Personen einwirken. Diese Romane zielen auf die Stadt selber, der sie sich mehr oder minder ausschließlich verschreiben.¹²⁴

Klotz, then, compares and contrasts novels from three different centuries (among them Lesage's *Le Diabolo Boiteux*; Victor Hugo's *Notre-Dame de Paris*; Dickens' *Barnaby Rudge* and Döblin's *Berlin Alexanderplatz*), in order to determine how the novel, which is subject to change and variation with the passage of time, (re)acts in relation to the equally changeable phenomenon of the city. Further, Klotz attempts to put to the test his hypothesis 'daß eine Affinität bestehe zwischen Stadt und Roman, zwischen einem außerpoetischen Gegenstand und einer poetischen Gattung' (11). Or, to formulate it as a question, as Klotz does: are there certain subjects that are particularly suited to specific literary genres?¹²⁵ Cases in point are the classic motifs of parricide in tragedies or the struggle between the powerless upstart and society's values and norms in dramatic comedy. Each category, he states, has 'seinen charakteristischen Themenkreis' (12).

In order to prove the inability of one literary form to tackle subjects outside its traditional boundaries, Klotz examines in brief the successes, or more often than not, the failures, of epic drama to deal with the topic of the city. The traditions of theatrical form limit the representation or staging of the city's 'Treiben' (14):

Die Weit- und Vielräumigkeit der Stadt, ihre gesellschaftliche Komplexität, das Ineinander und Gegeneinander von Privatleben und öffentlichem Berufs- und Verkehrsleben sprengen, wie gerafft auch immer, notwendig die Spieldauer eines Dramas und den Spielraum einer Bühne'. (15)

Instead, Klotz believes the genre of the novel to be more amenable to the process of dealing with the topic "city". It is more capable of providing a vehicle for its representation, the reasons for which are related to the novel's form, or

¹²⁴ Volker Klotz, *Die erzählte Stadt. Ein Sujet als Herausforderung des Romans von Lesage bis Döblin* (Munich: Hanser, 1969), p. 10. Future references from this source will be indicated by page numbers in round brackets directly after the quotation in the main text.

¹²⁵ Klotz points out that his use of literary examples to investigate this line of thought – the link between themes and literary genres – is not intended to corroborate his thesis at any cost. Whilst the analyses do share the theme of the city, Klotz also takes into account their respective idiosyncrasies. See Klotz, p. 20.

even its 'Formlosigkeit' (16). The genre is not restricted to linear narration but can rewind and digress, and contain 'breite Einschnitte, Sprünge, Wiederholungen, lose Verknüpfungen' (18). Moreover, the absence of pressure for the novel to concern itself with any one topic or theme lends it a flexibility that permits it to reflect the simultaneity and multiplicity of the city, its urban profile as well as internal life. Providing further scope for expression is the unrestricted use of language in the novel: rhythm, syntax, slang, and colloquialism are able to capture the idiosyncrasies of 'was [sich] in der Stadt kunterbunt [...] kreuzt und durchdringt' (18). Lastly, the length afforded the novel is also essential for the author to convey the magnitude of the city as an entity in its own right.

Might some of the novel's characteristics and its capacity for 'writing the city' as outlined by Klotz apply to the *feuilleton* article? Their similarities in terms of spatial and topographical aspects are examined at greater length in due course. Meanwhile, the *feuilleton* shares the novel's independence from thematic and stylistic rules, in addition to being unbound by prescribed content. Like the novel, *feuilleton* articles often include a type of narrative with a specific setting, plot, characters, dramatic composition, and – sometimes – an arc of suspense. Linguistic similarities also exist between the genres, as detailed previously, and *feuilleton* writers exploit comparable means of expression. They assume diverse roles (*flâneur*, satirist, chronicler, commentator), and employ a range of voices (critical, ambivalent, inquisitive, etc.) that enable the author to reflect on daily developments in Berlin. Kurt Tucholsky, for instance, published under a number of pseudonyms, including the 'agile aliases'¹²⁶ Peter Panter and Theobald Tiger, each representative of a specific mood or style. The *feuilleton* article is clearly restricted in terms of length: authors raise a variety of issues but must do so within limited parameters. Joseph Roth points to the *feuilleton* writer having to reflect on topics of interest and importance 'auf einer halben Seite'.¹²⁷ This constraint, however, does not prevent the *feuilleton* article from being equally capable of 'writing the city', as I will be highlighting in the analyses of writings by Roth, Tergit and Tucholsky.

¹²⁶ Istvan Deak, *Weimar Germany. Left-Wing Intellectuals: A Political History of the Weltbühne and its Circle* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1968), p. 34.

¹²⁷ Roth, 'Feuilleton', p. 617.

1.6 Writing The City: Literary Devices

Volker Klotz illustrates how the novel conveys the urban experience on the basis of one of the seminal texts of the twentieth century, Alfred Döblin's novel *Berlin Alexanderplatz* (1929). With his particular 'montage of aural and visual image'¹²⁸ Döblin attempts to evoke Berlin in its entirety and provides the city with an existence quite separate from the novel's human protagonists. Klotz draws attention to the novel's inclusion of information not necessarily intended to further the plot or even related to past or future episodes in the novel but rather aiming at providing 'ein Inbild der Gesamtstadt' (375). Particularly noteworthy are the one and a half pages dedicated by Döblin to the description of the city's main administration services, which capture 'alle Einrichtungen dieser Großgemeinde, ungeachtet dessen, ob vorher oder nachher Biberkopf in seiner Geschichte davon betroffen ist oder nicht' (375). The city thus appears to give expression to *itself*.¹²⁹ One rather literal way in which Berlin's "voice" is articulated is in the Berlin vernacular, resulting in the novel's faithful portrayal of the city's inhabitants; slang, idiom and dialect 'kennzeichnen seine Berliner Spezie' (386). In addition to the language used by characters, Döblin conveys the city's autonomy by various linguistic means: sounds and sights are narrated, and in effect communicate themselves through 'Formen, Farben, Bewegungen, Buchstaben' (390). Döblin's use of montage was at the time a new form of expression in prose narrative, the term denoting the technique of layering impressions, or what David B. Dollenmayer terms 'the paratactic juxtaposition of heterogenous elements',¹³⁰ in an attempt to transmit the simultaneity of the city, as well as the fragmentation and confusion of the urban experience.

Novelists, and indeed *feuilleton* writers, are destined only to capture elements or fragments of the urban panorama on the page, though Döblin's novel challenges this view with its pursuit of authenticity in bringing the *real* city to life in writing by adopting complex narrative styles. Burton Pike, however, diagnoses the fundamental dilemma that presents itself to all authors seeking to

¹²⁸ David B. Dollenmayer, 'An Urban Montage and Its Significance in Döblin's *Berlin Alexanderplatz*', *German Quarterly*, 53 (1980), 317–336 (320).

¹²⁹ See also David Midgley, "'Wieder auf dem Alex": Reading Döblin then and Now', in Weiss-Sussex and Zitzlsperger (eds), *Berlin. Kultur und Metropole*, pp. 97–109 (p. 101). Midgley refers to the 'sense in which Döblin was letting the city speak, as it were, with its own voice'.

¹³⁰ Dollenmayer, p. 319.

write the city: he or she, like the urban citizen, is never quite capable of viewing and processing the city in its totality. A significant issue that therefore characterises and influences urban depiction is the 'gulf between the living experience of a real city and the word-city'¹³¹ that exists on the page. Maria Balshaw and Liam Kennedy also voice the inherent problem of urban portraiture, and how the concept 'city' oscillates between the abstract, mental images of the city, and the material: 'The city is inseparable from its representations, but it is neither identical with nor reducible to them'.¹³² The process of transmitting urban reality – a subjective reality first and foremost – to a reader is, according to Pike, only achieved by means of 'reducing the city to words'.¹³³ Pike also echoes Balshaw's and Kennedy's point that evocations of the city are invariably 'parallel or analogous rather than identical'¹³⁴ to empirical cities. Novelists and *feuilleton* authors in particular must employ techniques essential to the process of producing 'close-ups' or 'miniaturisations' of the city, particularly in view of the limitations imposed on the length of *feuilleton* articles. Writers circumvent the issue of scale in part by seeking to represent urban life by use of a documentary approach, reportage, synecdoche, generalisations, associations and metaphorisation. This includes the depiction of physical spaces in the city, the use of topographical tropes to evoke the metropolitan experience. The composite nature of the city arguably allows for small parts – particular spaces – to be isolated and stand for the whole, and though the parts may provide only limited impressions, these suffice to encapsulate the experience of the city through the use of particular pre-existing associations in the minds of readers. Indeed, David Midgley views *feuilleton* texts as representing 'attempts of individual writers to construct an image of city life in the light of their own expectations and those of their anticipated readers'.¹³⁵ This highlights one of the distinctions that can be drawn between novels and *feuilleton* publications, namely the latter's closer writer-reader relationship. Following Midgley's line of reasoning, the collusion of both recipient and creator in what could be termed a pre-meditative projection of a particular impression is

¹³¹ Burton Pike, *The Image of the City in Modern Literature* (Surrey: Princeton University Press, 1981), p. 10.

¹³² Liam Kennedy and Maria Balshaw, 'Introduction', in Kennedy and Balshaw (eds), *Urban Space* (London: Pluto, 2000), p. 3.

¹³³ Pike, p. 11.

¹³⁴ Pike, p. 13.

¹³⁵ Midgley, *Writing Weimar*, p. 270, p. 271.

suggestive of a shared 'version' of Berlin specific to a class of (mostly liberal) readers already attuned to certain images of the city. Once it became a frequent thematic concern among writers, Berlin was rendered a phenomenon in effect not experienced at first hand; rather, the city consists of repeated texts, of numerous representations (in newspapers, magazines and literature) that, layer upon layer, increasingly inform the collective and individual consciousness (more detail of which is to follow in Chapter 2).¹³⁶

The early twentieth century saw a change in semantic registers used to describe the city in general and the urban experience in particular. As cities grew in size and complexity, and society and its perceptions of urban life changed, writers employed ever more vivid imagery to record their impressions of the built environment, its substance and ambience. This included metaphors that called upon natural symbolism to refer to paradoxical urban landscapes (*Stadtlandschaften*) or seas of houses (*Häusermeere*), concrete deserts (*Stadtwüste*),¹³⁷ or the city as coral reef (*Korallenstock*), as Döblin terms it.¹³⁸ The more dystopian visions among these allegories were born partially of the earlier Expressionist movement but also of the *Zeitgeist*, and the perceived potential dangers of the city, modernity and mass society. The dual nature of the fascination with the city produced conflict between competing emotions. On the one hand the city seemed, as the locus of modernity (of commercial, cultural and social activity), capable of representing a more humane society following the ravages of the Great War. Nature imagery, however, tends to imply both the promise of something good, as well as threat, and as the 1920s progressed, the prevailing view of the city's potential as a beacon of civilisation was increasingly overshadowed by a latent suspicion that progress through technological efficiency also presented a danger to man.¹³⁹ The tendency to liken Berlin to a *Moloch*, Babylon, or to 'Sodom und Gomorra'¹⁴⁰ is a common

¹³⁶ Peter Fritzsche investigates the concept of 'Stadttexte' in relation to Berlin at the turn of the twentieth century in his publication *Als Berlin zur Weltstadt wurde*. He examines the creation by the city's numerous newspapers of an urban identity among Berliners, as well as the interface between cultural life in Berlin and its representation in the press.

¹³⁷ See Joseph Roth, 'Die Asyle der Heimatlosen', in Roth, *Werke*, vol. 1, pp. 720–723 (p. 721).

¹³⁸ See Alfred Döblin, *Schriften zu Ästhetik, Poetik und Literatur*, ed. by Erich Kleinschmidt (Freiburg: Walter, 1989), p. 180.

¹³⁹ David Midgley has examined in detail how these social and cultural issues were reflected in the literature of the Weimar Republic in the chapter 'Technology versus Humanity' in Midgley, *Writing Weimar*, pp. 304–352.

¹⁴⁰ Erich Kästner, *Fabian. Die Geschichte eines Moralisten* (Munich: Deutscher Taschenbuch Verlag, 2007), p. 98.

trope of the times (especially in novels),¹⁴¹ though not a modern development. Stefan Zweig's retrospective description of Weimar Berlin as 'das Babel der Welt'¹⁴² echoes that of Ernst Dronke, who in 1846 noted contemporary preconceptions of Berlin, then the Prussian capital, as 'das andere Babel'.¹⁴³ In comparing Berlin to particular biblical cities, or cities in antiquity, that were associated with specific qualities – 'presumption (Babel), corruption (Babylon), perversion (Sodom and Gomorrah), power (Rome), destruction (Troy, Carthage)'¹⁴⁴ – writers reinforce the impression of sin and decadence. Other associations that came to the fore during the 1920s as a means of evoking the evolving modern city include that of the city as organism, the *Stadtkörper*: a corporeal being, similar to the human body (Joseph Roth and Kurt Tucholsky both take up the theme of Berlin as an unhealthy or defective organism, invoking particular spaces in the city to do so). The dynamics of city life and the incessant movement are equivalent to blood circulation; streets, railway lines and waterways appear as veins that lead into the centre or the *heart* of the city. The nervous system is represented by the invisible network of cables and wires that enable communication, the flow of electricity, and convey the intensity or pulse unique to urban life.¹⁴⁵ The perception of the city as being made up of arteries and veins found its way into the twentieth-century urban imaginary through the discovery in the seventeenth century of the body's blood circulation. Richard Sennett has traced the general habit of linking the material city to medicine and science, specifically the human body, to Enlightenment developments, when man became more knowledgeable and concerned about health and hygiene. The revelation that cleanliness equated to physical wellbeing was in time also transferred to cities: 'The desire to put into practice

¹⁴¹ See for instance Kästner's novel *Fabian*, and Joseph Roth's 1927 novel *Flucht ohne Ende*. Here Berlin is a malevolent entity feeding off human sacrifices. This view also finds filmic representation, most famously in Fritz Lang's *Metropolis* (1927).

¹⁴² Stefan Zweig, *Die Welt von Gestern. Erinnerungen eines Europäers* (Stockholm: Bermann-Fischer, 1942, repr. Frankfurt a. M.: Fischer, 1998), p. 357.

¹⁴³ Dronke, I, 9–10. The sociable aspect of urban living and the preoccupation with pleasure feature prominently in the urban portraits of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. See also Hans Dieter Schäfer's essay 'Berlin–Modernität und Zivilisationslosigkeit', in Derek Glass, Dietmar Rösler and John J. White (eds), *Berlin: Literary Images of a City. Eine Großstadt im Spiegel der Literatur* (Berlin: Schmidt 1989), pp. 107–123, for a description of the perceptions that have come to typify or correspond to common stereotypes about Berlin throughout its existence as both Prussian *Residenzstadt* and Germany's capital.

¹⁴⁴ Pike, p. 6–7.

¹⁴⁵ See Lothar Müller, 'Die Großstadt als Ort der Moderne. Über Georg Simmel', in Klaus R. Scherpe (ed.), *Die Unwirklichkeit der Städte. Großstadtdarstellungen zwischen Moderne und Postmoderne* (Reinbek bei Hamburg: Rowohlt, 1988), pp. 14–36 (p. 16).

the healthy virtues of respiration and circulation transformed the look of cities as well as the bodily practices in them'.¹⁴⁶ Joseph Roth uses the paradigm of the cyclical act of blood pumping through arteries, and of 'life-giving circulation',¹⁴⁷ in one of his better-known *feuilleton* articles, 'Bekenntnis zum Gleisdreieck' (1924), which depicts the industrial landscape surrounding the railway-station known as Gleisdreieck. His analogy includes the image of this particular station being the hub or heart of all activity: 'alle vitalen Energien des Umkreises haben hier Ursprung und Mündung zugleich, wie das Herz Ausgang und Ziel des Blutstromes ist, der durch die Adern des Körpers läuft'.¹⁴⁸

A further vital means of conveying urban life is the method of recording details, as carried out by Alfred Döblin in *Berlin Alexanderplatz*. The use of narrative as information, in form of descriptions of the visual and audible details and instructions broadcast across the city on billboards, in tram interiors, or overheard in the street, is cited by Philip Brady in the context of the increased use overall of particular modes of reporting during the course of the 1920s.¹⁴⁹ These included essayistic reportage, documentation, and *feuilletonism* as means of capturing phenomena particular to urban life. The publication *Spazieren in Berlin* (1929) by author and journalist Franz Hessel (1880–1941) is an exploration on foot of Weimar Berlin that visualises and reports the results of his urban investigations. The anecdotal, essayistic style of Hessel's work was perceived as 'symptomatic of both a change of feeling about Berlin and a changing mode of observation'.¹⁵⁰ The adoption of new forms of viewing and chronicling transformation by means of the sober listing of statistics, facts and figures, was felt to be a more authentic and thus a more appropriate means of conveying the urban experience.¹⁵¹

The scopic practice of 'reading' the 'Text der Stadt' and decoding the city's signs in an act of urban semiotics is often linked with the cultural-historical figure of the *flâneur* who typically walks leisurely in an urban setting without direction or aim, and free from all time constraints. Though I argue that the

¹⁴⁶ Richard Sennett, *Flesh and Stone: The Body and the City in Western Civilization* (London: W. W. Norton & Company, 1994), p. 263.

¹⁴⁷ Sennett, p. 263.

¹⁴⁸ Joseph Roth, 'Bekenntnis zum Gleisdreieck', in Roth, *Werke*, vol. 2, pp. 218–221 (p. 218).

¹⁴⁹ Philip Brady, 'Symphony and Jungle-Noises', in Glass and others (eds), *Berlin: Literary Images of a City*, pp. 83–106 (p. 90, p. 91).

¹⁵⁰ Brady, p. 89.

¹⁵¹ Matthias Uecker explores the modes of representation favoured by writers at the time in his study *Wirklichkeit und Literatur*.

feuilleton authors under examination in this thesis rarely conform to the model of the aimless stroller, the brief digression into the topic of the *flâneur* illustrates how he is linked with urban spaces and, moreover, how he uses space to record the effects of time. The origins of the purposeless wanderer – who is difficult to classify conclusively –¹⁵² and the distinction between the act of *flânerie* and mere walking, are described by Harald Neumeyer as follows:

Die Differenz [...] besteht im Raum, der begangen wird, und da das Flanieren an eine bestimmte Infrastruktur der Großstädte gebunden ist, datiert sein Entstehen auf das Paris der ersten Hälfte des 19. Jahrhunderts.¹⁵³

Paris of the nineteenth century was the capital of industrial modernity and advancing capitalism,¹⁵⁴ and is commonly regarded as the ‘birthplace’ of the *flâneur*. Indeed, Walter Benjamin (1892–1940) perceived the *flâneur* as the embodiment of modernity (though he can arguably also be regarded as a by-product of modernity as it emerged towards the end of the nineteenth century, his actions facilitated by the rapidly expanding and changing cities, and the growth of a mass market). Benjamin famously termed Paris the ‘Hauptstadt des 19. Jahrhunderts’¹⁵⁵ and notably interpreted the nineteenth-century urban experience from the literary *flâneur*’s perspective. Benjamin’s study ‘Das Paris des Second Empire bei Baudelaire’ (1939),¹⁵⁶ for instance, decodes Paris via Charles Baudelaire’s observations of the city in his capacity as *flâneur*, and the urban spaces of Paris are of central importance in his evocation of the era. Benjamin identifies the French capital and its ‘Passagen’ (glass-covered arcades that allowed pedestrians to perambulate, seek shelter or linger in front of shop windows) as the original territory and enabler of the directionless

¹⁵² Harald Neumeyer states: ‘Es gibt kein zeitloses Setting in dem die Figur des Flaneurs aufgeht, kein Wesen, das ihn jetztgültig erfasst, keinen sozialen Typ, mit dem er ausschließlich zu identifizieren ist’. Harald Neumeyer, *Der Flâneur. Konzeptionen der Moderne* (Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann, 1999), p. 17.

¹⁵³ Neumeyer, p. 11.

¹⁵⁴ See Gleber, pp. 6–12.

¹⁵⁵ Walter Benjamin, ‘Paris, die Hauptstadt des XIX. Jahrhunderts’, in Rolf Tiedemann (ed.), Walter Benjamin. *Gesammelte Schriften*, vol. 5.1 (Frankfurt a. M.: Suhrkamp, 1989), pp. 45–59 (p. 45).

¹⁵⁶ Walter Benjamin, ‘Das Paris des Second Empire bei Baudelaire’, in Rolf Tiedemann and Hermann Schweppenhäuser (eds), Walter Benjamin. *Gesammelte Schriften*, vol. 1.2 (Frankfurt a. M.: Suhrkamp, 1974), pp. 605–653.

wanderer: 'Die Flanerie hätte sich zu ihrer Bedeutung schwerlich ohne die Passagen entwickeln können'.¹⁵⁷

Literary explorations of urban space were, however, not restricted to those produced by Parisian metropolitan observers. There is evidence of nineteenth-century German authors having undertaken 'readings' of the city's social surface. As noted earlier, Heine's 'Briefe aus Berlin' arguably points to the emergence of the *flâneur* in German literature, whilst Ernst Dronke's study *Berlin* dedicates 'two chapters that dwell significantly on the spaces of *flânerie* under the headings "in the Streets" and "Public Life"'.¹⁵⁸ By all appearances, the phenomenon of the *flâneur* – like the *feuilleton* – experiences resurgences in popularity during transitional times: Dronke's Berlin is marked by the developments of industrialisation whilst Heine's city is still enduring the repercussions of the Napoleonic invasion in 1806 and ensuing national resistance to occupation by France. The *Kaiserzeit* and pre-First World War period were also productive eras, with Robert Walser creating vivid urban impressions and sketches of Berlin's cultural life, and Alfred Kerr establishing himself as a respected journalist and theatre critic. The years of the Weimar Republic, meanwhile, generated an even greater wealth of writings on metropolitan life by those who walked Berlin's streets, and gathered first-hand experience of the fluctuating phenomena that characterised the period: from the thriving café culture and the theatre world, to social and political events. Reference has already been made to Franz Hessel, 'professional decipherer'¹⁵⁹ of urban surfaces, who recorded in discursive portraits the changes to particular topographical features in the city. Hessel maps out spaces connected with the rapid modernisation of the Weimar Republic. The mode of walking and the mobile street perspective have long been identified as the ideal means by which the *flâneur* could observe urban life; the purposeless walk was a metaphor for the meandering prose-form of his 'beschreibende und reflexive Textpassagen'.¹⁶⁰ Hessel exhibits a similarly ambling style in *Spazieren in*

¹⁵⁷ See Walter Benjamin, 'Der Flaneur' in Benjamin, GS, vol. 1.2, pp. 537–569.

¹⁵⁸ Gleber, p. 14.

¹⁵⁹ Lauster, p. 9.

¹⁶⁰ Köhn, p. 110. It ought to be noted, however, that not all *feuilleton* writers were also *flâneurs* and vice versa. Modes of observation differed from one writer to the next; the *flâneur* could also be an observer in far more general terms.

Berlin, a work referred to by Karl Schlögel as an ‘epochenmachende Studie’¹⁶¹ of the city’s urban landscape. Hessel’s work – rooted in aesthetic theory,¹⁶² the complexities of which will not be detailed here – performs what Köhn identifies as the *flâneur*’s task: to preserve for posterity the traces of the city’s history, as well as evidence of change inscribed in Berlin’s surfaces. The book’s individual chapters ‘fügen [...] sich einer übergreifenden gewissermaßen topographischen Anordnung: nach sechs Eingangskapiteln wird in jeweils auf einen Stadtteil bezogenen Kapiteln das Ganze der Stadtlandschaft darzustellen versucht’.¹⁶³ During the course of Hessel’s wanderings, the urban environment becomes analogous to a landscape, capable of being read in concrete as well as in abstract terms. Hessel indeed refers to the act of ‘flanieren’ as:

eine Art Lektüre der Straße, wobei Menschengesichter, Auslagen, Schaufenster, [...] zu lauter gleichberechtigten Buchstaben werden, die zusammen Worte, Sätze und Seiten eines immer neuen Buches ergeben.¹⁶⁴

Köhn highlights how the ‘Buchmetaphorik’ – the tendency to view the city as one might a book – presented itself frequently as a means of observing Berlin and ‘die Elemente der urbanen Alltagsrealität’.¹⁶⁵ Hessel approached the city from the perspective of a local inhabitant in the act of rediscovery. His intimate knowledge of the city, and scrutiny of aspects of Berlin’s local history and geography – he, like Roth, Tergit and Tucholsky is not particularly concerned with landmarks – call attention to a concept common to the discourse on the city: the metropolis as an urban palimpsest. The city consists of ‘layers of buildings, or “writing” where previous strata of cultural coding underlie the present surface, and each waits to be uncovered and “read”’.¹⁶⁶ During the act of ‘reading’ cities, the interplay between the past – in form of physical constructs built at different times in past eras – and the present (city dwellers inhabit these constructs and spaces created in the past) is revealed. The palimpsest metaphor, also employed by Tergit and Tucholsky in their writings, is particularly valid in relation to Berlin whose civic and topographical profile was

¹⁶¹ Schlögel, p. 262.

¹⁶² For more detail see ‘Die Wiederkehr des Flaneurs: Franz Hessel’, in Köhn, pp. 153–193.

¹⁶³ Köhn, p. 178.

¹⁶⁴ Hessel, p. 130.

¹⁶⁵ Köhn, p. 184.

¹⁶⁶ William Sharpe and Leonard Wallock, “From ‘Great Town’ to ‘Nonplace Urban Realm’: Reading the Modern City”, in Sharpe and Wallock (eds), *Visions of the Modern City: Essays in History, Art and Literature* (Baltimore: The John Hopkins Press, 1987), pp. 1–50 (p. 9).

long construed as mutable; its cityscape in permanent transition.¹⁶⁷ About his own act of uncovering Berlin's past and reflecting on the city's future, Hessel states:

Ich muß eine Art Heimatkunde betreiben [...], mich um die Vergangenheit und Zukunft dieser Stadt kümmern, dieser Stadt, die immer unterwegs, immer im Begriff, anders zu werden, ist.¹⁶⁸

The figure of the *flâneur*, be it in Benjamin or Hessel, can be seen to have an explicit understanding of the spatial dimension of modernity, and how urban spaces in the city reflect history and its repercussions.

The 'city as text' metaphor is arguably unthinkable without the material and visual means – the built artifact – that supports the very claim that the city is analogous to language, what literary theorist Scherpe refers to as 'Architektursemiotik'.¹⁶⁹ At the same time, however, the concept of the city's 'legibility' has encountered arguments from scholars from the social sciences, who challenge the 'Buchmetaphorik'¹⁷⁰ and 'the elucidation of the "city as text"'.¹⁷¹ Liam Kennedy and Maria Balshaw are among those who have difficulty taking the metaphor of 'reading the city' at face value. As noted previously, they point to the limited ability of language to help inform our understanding of the city, and though 'language plays an important part in shaping our comprehension of the city, representation also involves material, visual and psychic forms and practices that cannot be reduced to textuality'.¹⁷² As far as texts that record metropolitan life and culture are concerned, one might venture to assert that these contain an inherent awareness of the constraints imposed by language. What the scholars' observation underlines, however, is the interconnectedness between physical space (the city) and its representation. The literary city is intrinsically spatial: discursive descriptions or representations

¹⁶⁷ Berlin's reputation as a city in permanent flux is attributed by Wolf Jobst Siedler to the city's rapid transformation from royal capital of Prussia at the turn from the seventeenth to eighteenth century, to being the centre of the new German empire in 1871. Entering the twentieth century, Berlin was in the throes of industrial modernity. See Wolf Jobst Siedler, *Phoenix im Sand. Glanz und Elend der Hauptstadt* (Berlin: Propyläen, 2005), p. 109.

¹⁶⁸ Hessel, p. 12.

¹⁶⁹ Klaus R. Scherpe, 'Von der erzählten Stadt zur Stadterzählung. Der Großstadtdiskurs in Alfred Döblins Berlin Alexanderplatz,' in Klaus R. Scherpe (ed.), *Stadt Krieg Fremde. Literatur und Kultur nach den Katastrophen* (Tübingen and Basel: Francke, 2002), pp. 17–35 (p. 19).

¹⁷⁰ Hessel, p. 184.

¹⁷¹ Kennedy and Balshaw, 'Introduction', in Kennedy and Balshaw (eds), *Urban Space and Representation*, p. 4.

¹⁷² Kennedy and Balshaw, 'Introduction', p. 4.

of urban spaces (imaginary or concrete) and spatial practices, topographies as locations for action, as symbols or even as central characters, are essential aspects of texts that 'write the city'. As such, the following sub-chapter examines the theoretical convergence between the abstraction of the 'Stadt als Text', as engaged with by literary theorists, and investigations by sociologists and urban theorists into the complexities of the material city. Above all, it charts the current spatial turn across the social sciences and literary studies, an analytical category that places emphasis on space as 'theoretical and thematic focus'.¹⁷³

1.7 Methodological Approach: Spatial Theory

Spatial theory can essentially be classed a new mode of critical examination of space and the ways in which it can be conceived of. Karl Schlögel considers space crucial in the interpretation of all human experience and for the formation of knowledge: the *where* is able to reveal the *how* of unfolding events. Edward Soja emphasises his inclination to perceive and decode 'the world by assertively foregrounding a spatial perspective'.¹⁷⁴ He highlights that space:

is a vital existential force shaping our lives, an influential aspect of everything that ever was, is, or will be, a transdisciplinary way of looking at and interpreting the world that is as insightful and revealing as that of the historian.¹⁷⁵

Soja has been instrumental in making the case for greater consideration of the spatial dimension of history. In an essay published in 2008, he describes in personal terms how he became a vocal proponent of the so-called spatial turn, an approach that promotes the advancement of space over time, and (to paraphrase Soja) of geography over history, in the act of interpreting historical experience. The concept of the 'spatial turn' may conceivably be viewed as controversial, particularly by scholars who refute the posited disappearance of the topic of space from analytical discourse, as suggested by Soja. He argues that the foregrounding of temporality continues to dominate historical and philosophical agendas, and that space has fallen victim to this habitual elevation of the temporal dimension. Schlögel also stresses humans' reliance

¹⁷³ Fisher and Mennel, 'Introduction', in Fisher and Mennel (eds), *Spatial Turns*, pp. 9–23 (p. 9).

¹⁷⁴ Soja, 'Taking space personally', in Warf and Arias (eds), *The Spatial Turn*, p. 11.

¹⁷⁵ Soja, 'Taking space personally', p. 11.

on the narrative, the chronological, 'zeitliche Sequenz der Ereignisse'¹⁷⁶ that occur in history. In the chapter entitled 'Spatial Turn – endlich', Schlögel traces the spatial turn's progression, and describes how diverse strands of spatial thought (from the disciplines of urban studies, philosophy, sociology, and geography) developed independent of, and tangential to, one another over the past two decades, and eventually appeared to converge. As the 'spatial turn' they were able to articulate some of the collective concerns dominating the epoch. One such debate circled around the continuing validity of the so-called 'grand narrative' as a means of rationalising the human experience. Given the incoherent, disjointed stages of historical development as witnessed during the twentieth century, postmodernists increasingly expressed doubt over the authority of *the* story that claimed to represent historical knowledge. In time, criticism was directed particularly at the grand narrative's presupposed teleological progress of civilisation, what Jaimey Fisher and Barbara Mennel term 'the unilateral "progress" of modernity'.¹⁷⁷ History was re-conceptualised as comprising multiple, coexisting narratives and experiences. The postmodernist concept of 'small stories' was, then, a means of offering a more representative interpretation of occurrences in time, one that expressed both the local and universal human experience, and influenced the return to spatial thinking. Particularly in an image-dominated time, and with an ever more socially mobile society, spatial interpretations made increasingly more sense: a growing orientation towards spaces, the notion that they are imbued with meaning and instrumental in the production of cultural knowledge, replaced the fixation on the temporal nature of historical knowledge. Though this is not a new idea sprung from the minds of scholars reasserting space onto the critical agenda, the fundamental principle of the spatial turn – declaring the parity of space and time – is.

The theorising of space and place is indebted to cultural theorists and philosophers such as Henri Lefebvre (1901–1991), Michel de Certeau (1925–1986), Paul Virilio (1932–) and Michel Foucault (1926–1984), who in the late 1960s questioned why space was commonly regarded as an immutable, vessel-like entity, as opposed to possessing the mobility and dynamism of

¹⁷⁶ Schlögel, p. 9.

¹⁷⁷ Fisher and Mennel, 'Introduction', in Fisher and Mennel (eds), *Spatial Turns*, p. 11.

time.¹⁷⁸ As Sighard Neckel elaborates: 'Zeit war das Veränderliche, der Raum das vermeintlich Festgefügte, das an sich nicht wandelbar ist'.¹⁷⁹ Foucault's contemporary, Henri Lefebvre, was a Marxist philosopher who in his publication *La production de l'espace* (1974)¹⁸⁰ expanded the argument against the entrenched notion of space as merely a passive receptacle, a background to historical happenings. Lefebvre's major contribution to the field of urban theory in the 1970s was his concept of socially constructed space: the belief that social activity and spatial practices are preconditions for the existence of space. Space is essentially *produced*, rather than simply being present in its own right. Lefebvre categorised space into three groups, so-called 'perceived' or material space that is capable of being studied (geographically, cartographically); conceived space or "representations of space" that are designed by 'today's planners, whose system of localization assigns an exact spot to each activity'¹⁸¹ (Fisher and Mennel also refer to this category as spaces that 'make up the spatial imaginary');¹⁸² and lastly, "representational spaces". The latter term describes lived spaces that are, in Lefebvre's words, 'redolent with imaginary and symbolic elements',¹⁸³ and represent or project a particular ideology.¹⁸⁴ The third category, as Fisher and Mennel point out, 'seems to be a mixture of [...] physical and conceived spaces'.¹⁸⁵ Central to Lefebvre's spatial analysis was the focus on the distribution of the means of production and subsequent production of social relations. His work was born out of the urban unrest in Paris of the late 1960s, in the wake of which there 'grew to be a revolutionary new way to think about space and the powerful effects of specifically urban spatiality on human behaviour and societal development'.¹⁸⁶ David Harvey advanced the topic of space in social theory and adopts a Marxist approach to what had

¹⁷⁸ Foucault's thoughts on space were published in 1984; entitled *Des Espace Autres / Of Other Spaces*, the text is based on a lecture first given in March 1967.

¹⁷⁹ Sighard Neckel, 'Felder, Relationen, Ortseffekte. Sozialer und physischer Raum,' in Moritz Csáky and Christoph Leitgeb (eds), *Kommunikation, Gedächtnis, Raum. Kulturwissenschaften nach dem » Spatial Turn«* (Bielefeld: Transcript, 2009), pp. 45–55 (p. 45).

¹⁸⁰ Lefebvre's publication was not translated (*The Production of Space*) until 1991.

¹⁸¹ Fisher and Mennel, 'Introduction', in Fisher and Mennel (eds), *Spatial Turns*, p. 14.

¹⁸² Henri Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, trans. by Donald Nicholson-Smith (Oxford: Blackwell, 1991), p. 45.

¹⁸³ Lefebvre, p. 41.

¹⁸⁴ For more detail see Robert Stockhammer, 'Einleitung', in Robert Stockhammer (ed.), *Topographien der Moderne. Medien zur Repräsentation und Konstruktion von Räumen* (Munich: Fink, 2005), pp. 7–21 (p. 20).

¹⁸⁵ Fisher and Mennel, 'Introduction', in Fisher and Mennel (eds), *Spatial Turns*, p. 14.

¹⁸⁶ Soja, pp. 11–35 (p. 17).

formerly been strictly geographical concerns. According to Phil Hubbard, Harvey's work is 'interested in how social processes produce spatial forms',¹⁸⁷ a concept that instigated the practice among scholars of regarding social theory as being inextricably linked with spatial considerations.

Coinciding with individual theorists' development of spatial thinking was the rise in the 1970s and 1980s of so-called 'urban studies': the interdisciplinary approach to studying civic life, which took into account social, economic, and cultural issues, in addition to city-planning and the interrelation between citizens and their urban milieu. The preoccupation with the urban can be traced back to the 1920s and 1930s, and the so-called "Chicago School", a group of sociologists who specialised in urban sociology. Though not strictly speaking spatially focused, their investigations of social behaviour as influenced by environmental factors had at their heart geographical concerns. Instrumental in the development of the school's theoretical perspective were the works of sociologist Georg Simmel (1858–1918), who in the first decade of the twentieth century essentially 'spatialised' time – i.e. modernity – by perceiving its physical manifestation to lie in the form of the modern city. Simmel contributed significantly to the concept of the city as a topic overall, and his writings on urban culture – whether it in fact existed as a category distinct from other cultures – are of direct relevance to the examination of the early twentieth-century city in general, and Berlin specifically. Simmel's writings on modernity are likely to have been directly influenced by his time spent living and teaching in Berlin. The notion of 'modernity' can perhaps be said to have played out most vividly and concretely here. Chris Rojak points out that, between Berlin's attaining nation-capital status in 1871 and the First World War, Simmel 'directly observed the extraordinary expansion of the city, the tearing down of old buildings and raising-up of new ones [...], the expansion in population and subcultures; and the emergence of new retail outlets, notably the department store and the shopping arcade'.¹⁸⁸ In his seminal text *Die Großstädte und das Geistesleben* (1903), Simmel analyses urban culture and, specifically, the experience of modernity. Modernity, in Simmel's view, is epitomised by the two

¹⁸⁷ Phil Hubbard, Rob Kitchin and Gill Valentine, *Key Thinkers on Space and Place* (London: Sage, 2008), p. 182.

¹⁸⁸ Chris Rojak, 'Georg Simmel', in Tim Edwards (ed.), *Cultural Theory: Classical and Contemporary Positions* (London et al.: Sage, 2007), pp. 35–47 (p. 37, p. 38).

phenomena money and the modern city. The culture of modernity was thus synonymous with urban culture. The experience of modernity itself was suggested by Simmel to be a powerful, unrelenting assault on the senses, and the setting of modernity – the metropolis – was complicit in creating correspondingly fluid, transitory relationships, marked by the ebb and flow of people coursing through the city. The metropolitan lifestyle, ‘mit jedem Gang über die Straße, mit dem Tempo und den Mannigfaltigkeiten des wirtschaftlichen, beruflichen, gesellschaftlichen Lebens’,¹⁸⁹ stands in opposition to the small town and rural life, whose pace is unhurried and regular. The city, according to Simmel, creates two distinct types of metropolitan identities: the rational / intellectual (‘verstandesmäßig’) (11) and the blasé (‘blasiert’) (19). These psychological conditions developed as a result of the ‘raschen und ununterbrochenen Wechsel äußerer und innerer Eindrücke’ (9) – the visual culture pervading the public realm. The rational intellect is likened by Simmel to a ‘Schutzorgan’ (11) which helps ‘fend off’ or cope with images and impressions that threaten to bewilder city dwellers. These, in turn, encounter each other with what Simmel terms ‘Reserviertheit’ (23). Simmel’s assessment of modernity’s impact on the individual – an impact that was captured by Joseph Roth and Kurt Tucholsky in their *feuilleton* articles – was particularly significant in the fields of sociology and philosophy of urban culture, influencing later works by Siegfried Kracauer (1889–1966), Max Weber (1864–1920) and Ernst Bloch (1885–1977).¹⁹⁰ His analyses also fed into the writing of architectural critic and sociologist Lewis Mumford (1895–1990), and later, the urban designer Kevin Lynch. Mumford wrote on urban culture and society, and in 1937 published ‘What is a City?’, an essay on urban design and the ‘social function’¹⁹¹ he perceives the city to perform. Like Simmel, Mumford also draws a distinction between the city and countryside, and their respective ‘mentalities’ (Kurt Tucholsky frequently highlights this aspect). The city, according to Mumford,

¹⁸⁹ Georg Simmel, *Die Großstädte und das Geistesleben* (Frankfurt a. M.: Suhrkamp, 2006), p. 10. Future references from this source will be indicated by page numbers in round brackets directly after the quotation in the main text.

¹⁹⁰ Simmel’s theories on the city and urban culture continue to influence present-day urban studies. See the recent publication *Georg Simmel und die aktuelle Stadtforschung: Interdisziplinäre Betrachtungen zu Dichte, Diversität und Dynamik der Großstadt*, ed. by Harald A. Mieg, Astrid O. Sundsboe and Majken Bieniok (Wiesbaden: VS Verlag für Sozialwissenschaften, 2011)

¹⁹¹ Lewis Mumford, ‘What is a City?’ in Richard T. LeGates and Frederic Stout (eds), *The City Reader* (London and New York: Routledge, 1996), pp. 183–188 (p. 184).

creates and possesses drama (unlike the suburbs and rural regions); its diversity and the potential for antagonism between metropolitans modifies their personalities, 'they become many-faceted: they reflect their specialised interests, their more intensely trained aptitudes, their finer discriminations and selections [...]'.¹⁹²

In the 1960s, Kevin Lynch (1918–1984) addressed the relationship between urban design and human culture, particularly the *mental* relationship between the urban environment and city dweller in *The Image of the City*¹⁹³ (1960). Lynch presents a breakdown of how people perceive cities; how they structure the city – filled with an abundance of signifiers that possess meaning – cognitively in order to orientate themselves. Lynch's findings most notably point towards humans being in possession of so-called mental maps: spatial information on geographical surroundings is organised subjectively and aids our everyday orientation in the city. Lynch's study is included here for its simple, lucid categorisation of the image we have of the city into five types of what he terms 'elements': paths, edges, districts, nodes and landmarks.¹⁹⁴ Lynch's 'paths' are pavements or lanes we ordinarily travel along on foot, by bike or other, but also 'transit lines, canals, railroads'.¹⁹⁵ The urban image relies heavily on these paths: what is viewed from paths forms part of the individual's mental image of the city, and we configure how the city's many paths interconnect and relate to one another. 'Edges', meanwhile, border onto paths, and separate two areas from one another. Lynch's 'districts' are individual sections belonging to a city; the observer thinks of them as 'enterable', and they are 'always identifiable from the inside'.¹⁹⁶ 'Nodes' occur in areas characterized by a concentration of junctions or paths, and can also be 'places of a break in transportation, a crossing or [...] moments of shift from one structure to another'.¹⁹⁷ Significantly, nodes shape our mental image of the city, as we associate them with decision-making: nodes are junctions or an assembly of paths from which we must select one or the other. Lastly, 'landmarks' denote an external point of reference in forms of buildings, memorials, towers; any structure that acts as an orientation

¹⁹² Ibid.

¹⁹³ Kevin Lynch, *The Image of the City* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press, 1960).

¹⁹⁴ Lynch, p. 46.

¹⁹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁹⁶ Lynch, p. 46.

¹⁹⁷ Ibid.

point within a city or even beyond its limits. Landmarks are approached from a multitude of directions and function as guidance and identification points. What is notable about these groupings is that they mirror the surface of the city, and thus assist in the process of 'structuring' the city. Such a 'functional' theorisation of the city is fruitful for the spatial analysis of *feuilleton* articles, as I will be highlighting in my study of Gabriele Tergit's urban writings in particular.

1.8 Literary Analysis and Spatial Thinking

Barney Warf and Santa Arias argue that literary criticism is among those fields that 'assert that space is a social construction relevant to the understanding of the different histories of human subjects and to the production of cultural phenomena'.¹⁹⁸ Wolfgang Hallet points out that this has not always been the case, and literary criticism consistently consigned the topic of space to a position of lesser importance to temporal perspectives. Volker Klotz, for example, had consciously avoided the study of topographical issues in his analysis of urban literature in the late 1960s, regarding the subject as outside the remit of literary theory.¹⁹⁹ Hallet speaks of 'einer anhaltenden Marginalisierung räumlicher Kategorien in der Literaturwissenschaft gegenüber temporalisierenden Analyseformen'.²⁰⁰ The comparative neglect, he says, lies in the fact that 'die Darstellung von Räumen vor allem in der narratologischen Forschung zumeist unter dem Oberbegriff der Beschreibung diskutiert wird'.²⁰¹ Like the historicism that has governed western theoretical thought (and which regarded change as occurring sequentially instead of simultaneously), literary criticism also privileged time – the realm of the narrative – over space. Space was, in other words, long viewed by scholars as a backdrop without intrinsic cultural value, against which narrative and literary action occur and develop. Space was essentially a mere embellishment of 'einer zeitlich organisierten, dynamischen Narration'.²⁰²

¹⁹⁸ Warf and Arias, 'Introduction', in Warf and Arias (eds), *The Spatial Turn*, pp. 1–10 (p. 1).

¹⁹⁹ Klotz, p. 9.

²⁰⁰ Wolfgang Hallet and Birgit Neumann, 'Raum und Bewegung in der Literatur. Zur Einführung', in Wolfgang Hallet and Birgit Neumann (eds), *Raum und Bewegung in der Literatur. Die Literaturwissenschaft und der Spatial Turn* (Bielefeld: Transcript, 2009), pp. 11–32 (p. 19).

²⁰¹ Hallet and Neumann, p. 19.

²⁰² Hallet and Neumann, p. 19.

There is evidence, however, that by the late 1980s literary theory had begun to assume the more complex notion of urban texts as not simply being *about* the setting in a straightforward sense, but argued instead for a complex understanding of space as much more than just a map of place names. Klaus R. Scherpe, for example, addresses concepts of place and space in the urban novel in his volume *Stadt, Krieg, Fremde: Literatur und Kultur nach den Katastrophen*.²⁰³ Scherpe cautions that the terms ‘Ort’ and ‘Raum’ ought not be used indiscriminately or interchangeably. The rationale provided is that ‘place’ and ‘space’ in literature are constructs that exist symbolically only: they are physical attributes created by means of linguistics. Scherpe defines ‘place’ as ‘Ordnungs - und Orientierungskategorie [...]. An Orten orientiere ich mich’.²⁰⁴ Places are said to be material locations that are determinable, attest to an event having taken place, and thus look to the past. The concept of space, meanwhile, ‘entsteht erst durch die Auszeichnung oder Auffüllung von Leere’.²⁰⁵ It exists only as a result of its being filled or marked by some entity, a process that implies present and future action. Place denotes a defined area with an unambiguous limit, in contrast to the ‘metaphorische Unschärfe’²⁰⁶ of the term ‘space’.

In his study *Berlin – Asphalt und Licht. Die große Stadt in der Literatur der Weimarer Republik*²⁰⁷ Hermann Kähler also examines the urban novel, focusing on the term and the notion behind it: literary action taking place within metropolitan space. Kähler highlights the spatial and thus inherently political dimensions of any novel classed as an ‘urban novel’, one in which the city constitutes an ‘Ort der Handlung’ (78). In reference to the three unities of action, place and time of classical drama, Kähler suggests it might be more appropriate or necessary to broaden the category of ‘Ort der Handlung’ and instead speak of the novel’s ‘Handlungsraum’ (78) in view of the multiple spaces traversed during its course. A story’s ‘Handlungsraum’ also brings with it, linguistically as well as ideologically, a set of considerations. For instance, the space within which events occur:

²⁰³ Klaus R. Scherpe, ‘Im Text der Stadt’, in Scherpe (ed.), *Stadt, Krieg, Fremde*, pp. 3–73.

²⁰⁴ Scherpe, ‘Im Text der Stadt’, p. 8.

²⁰⁵ Ibid.

²⁰⁶ Scherpe, ‘Im Text der Stadt’, p. 9.

²⁰⁷ Kähler, *Berlin – Asphalt und Licht*. Future references from this source will be indicated by page numbers in round brackets directly after the quotation in the main text.

hat neben den örtlichen Gegebenheiten auch ethisch-weltanschauliche Koordinaten, die in den räumlichen Strukturen von “oben–unten”, “offen–geschlossen”, “hoch–niedrig”, “rechts–links”, “nah–fern”, “unterbrochen–ununterbrochen” usw. zum Ausdruck kommen (78).

These spatial dialectics are also particularly valid for the reading of *feuilleton* articles. Similarly, Kähler’s explanation that the setting of a novel in Weimar Berlin does not result in a mere portrait of a large city also applies to *feuilleton* texts. Urban novels neither simply take place in locations in the city, nor is the novel exclusively *about* the city; rather, urban literature, including the *feuilleton*, shows evidence of ‘ein Zusammenwirken von Aktion, Akteur und Schauplatz in einem bestimmten geistigen Normensystem’ (78).

The conceptual shift in the field of literature in the past twenty years has thus seen space emerge as a vital theoretical category. Space has ceased to be a mere venue for social interaction, but is rather a constitutive part of its very being. Space and social activity stand in interdependent relation to one another: space is, on the one hand (and as Lefebvre argued), the product of social activity; social activity, on the other hand, is shaped by spaces, which are always inherently significant. Theories of space imported from the social sciences have prompted new ways of examining and interpreting literary spaces. Literature is particularly well suited to spatial analysis given that social relations usually unfold in specific locations and surroundings during the course of novels and *feuilletons*, and, as stated above, that literary characters – and indeed *feuilleton* authors – traverse and inhabit any number of spaces (urban, rural, metaphysical, representational, symbolic, real and imaginary). In their 2010 publication *Geopoetiken*, Magdalena Marszałek and Sylvia Sasse investigate specifically the correlation between geography and literature, and the fictive geographies in Eastern European literature. The term *Geopoetik*, they point out, carries within it the idea of the literary construction of ‘Territorien und Landschaften in der Literatur’.²⁰⁸ Spatial thinking has indeed resulted in geographical models being applied to formerly purely critical or speculative disciplines, including the examination in literature of concepts such as mapping and cartography; borders and boundaries; spatialising; centres, peripheries and

²⁰⁸ Magdalena Marszałek and Sylvia Sasse, ‘Geopoetiken’, in Marszałek and Sasse (eds), *Geopoetiken. Geographische Entwürfe in den Mittel- und Osteuropäischen Literaturen* (Berlin: Kadmos, 2010), pp. 7–18 (p. 9).

margins; territory and territoriality; topology and topography. Fisher and Mennel, in their 2010 collection of essays that analyse German literature, film, theatre and photography in a spatial context, highlight how the:

[...] emphasis on space [...] allows authors to read canonical literary and cinematic texts anew and to interrogate formerly peripheral genres, such as maps, guides, and travelogues.²⁰⁹

Retrospective spatial 'readings' of literary works – specifically the *feuilleton* – are able to generate spaces, cartographies, and topographies beyond what is shown on the page in form of so-called mental maps. This approach is particularly essential for the *feuilleton*, since the role of geography and cartography, and how these impact upon our reading of the texts and the resulting perceptions of Weimar Berlin, remain entirely unexamined. Crucially, a focus on space draws attention to the importance of geography in cultural production, and thus in the production of knowledge. An illustration of the productivity of a spatial reading, and how the emphasis on space in *feuilleton* articles assists our understanding of culture, follows below in form of an analysis of Siegfried Kracauer's Berlin article 'Aus dem Fenster gesehen'. In his text, Kracauer reads an everyday space as a means of presenting and explaining modernity, and the traits associated with the epoch.

1.8.1 Siegfried Kracauer: Spatial Theory in Practice

Siegfried Kracauer (born in Frankfurt am Main) was one of Weimar Germany's leading cultural journalists and theorists whose urban awareness and focus on the topic of the experience of the metropolis were central to his essays from early on in his journalistic career. Born into a Jewish family, Kracauer began working as a journalist and cultural critic in 1921 at the *Frankfurter Zeitung*, one of the Weimar Republic's most prestigious newspapers. In 1930 he relocated to Berlin in order to lead the editorial office of the *Frankfurter Zeitung* as successor to Bernard von Brentano, before being forced to flee Germany for France in February 1933.²¹⁰ Kracauer published almost two thousand *feuilleton* articles

²⁰⁹ Fisher and Mennel, 'Introduction', in Fisher and Mennel (eds), *Spatial Turns* p. 9.

²¹⁰ In 1929, the *Frankfurter Zeitung* fell under the stewardship of the conservative forces of I.G. Farben, a chemical industry conglomerate. The increasing ideological transformations resulted in Kracauer's being forced to moderate his socio-political critiques or, in some instances, saw his writings rejected entirely. Kracauer's time at the *Frankfurter Zeitung*

during his tenure at the *Frankfurter Zeitung*, including court writings, travel reports, book and film reviews, and architectural essays. He spent his formative years in Frankfurt am Main and was a relative latecomer to Berlin. Though visiting the Weimar capital intermittently throughout the 1920s, Kracauer, according to Köhn, showed 'kein sonderliches Interesse an der Hauptstadt'²¹¹ until his move to the city in 1930. Even then, his relocation owed more to obligation than choice. Inka Mülder outlines how Kracauer was effectively driven out of Frankfurt and made to take up the post as *feuilleton*-editor in Berlin instead of being promoted to chief review editor in his hometown.²¹² Other scholars, such as Helmut Stalder, contest the suggestion that Kracauer was 'banished' to Berlin, and contend that, though under pressure to relocate, Kracauer was not entirely averse to the move.²¹³ In the capital, Kracauer's recorded impressions of the city were not simply descriptive but also analytical, and formulated into factual, sociological reports. His approach to the social, cultural, political and economic changes in the Weimar Republic was a documentary one, and his work intersects other fields of study, indicating his training as both a practitioner (architect) and a theorist (sociologist). Kracauer perceived Berlin as being at the forefront of social change and the 'Entwicklungen der Epoche'²¹⁴ in Weimar Germany. He carried out analyses of the culture of the masses, and what David Frisby terms 'the superficial phenomena of modernity'²¹⁵ that flourished in the early 1930s, as people sought to flee from the realities of difficult everyday existence. Particularly present in his urban observations of Berlin are the social effects brought about by the

came to an end in 1933, when he was dismissed for writing articles inimical to the paper's conservative politics. Like Kurt Tucholsky in 1924 and Joseph Roth in 1925, Kracauer also left Berlin for Paris. Thereafter, Kracauer spent twenty-five years in exile in the United States (1941–1966) during which time he published two theoretical studies, *From Caligari to Hitler* (1947), and *Theory of Film* (1960). It was not until 1963 that some of Kracauer's most important writings from the time of the Weimar Republic were assembled and re-issued under the editorship of Kracauer himself in his publication *Das Ornament der Masse*. Combining film theory with a sociological reading of mass media, Kracauer's collected essays investigate and analyse mass culture in the Weimar Republic. Kracauer died in New York in 1966. For further detail of Kracauer's time in exile, see Inka Mülder, *Siegfried Kracauer. Grenzgänger zwischen Theorie und Literatur. Seine frühen Schriften 1913-1933* (Stuttgart: Metzler, 1985), pp. 10–13.

²¹¹ Köhn, p. 239.

²¹² See Mülder, *Grenzgänger*, p. 9.

²¹³ See Helmut Stalder, *Siegfried Kracauer. Das journalistische Werk in der Frankfurter Zeitung 1921-1933* (Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann, 2003), p. 44, p. 45.

²¹⁴ Stalder, p. 45.

²¹⁵ Frisby, *Fragments of Modernity*, p. 133.

economic crisis following the crash of the New York stock exchange in 1929: growing unemployment, the demise of social milieus (middle-class residential areas), and the changes occurring in Berlin's *Stadtbild* as a result of financial chaos. Among the reasons why I have chosen not to analyse Kracauer's wider body of journalistic work is precisely his theoretical approach to Berlin's depiction, and the conscious use of spatial theory in his analysis of modernity. Kracauer was, unlike Joseph Roth, Gabriele Tergit and Kurt Tucholsky, read rather by an expert audience – sociologists and architects – who sought his judgment. He was a trained architect, as well as having studied philosophy and sociology, the latter under the mentorship of Georg Simmel. The German sociologist's study of the modern city's mentality influenced Kracauer's socio-philosophical interest in urban analysis. Kracauer is also not a *feuilleton* writer in the traditional sense of the word. Such authors as Roth, Tergit and Tucholsky were deeply engaged with Berlin, are familiar with the city and have considerable bodies of work that focus their (*feuilletonistic*) attention on the city.

Kracauer's writings are well suited to illustrating the importance of the spatial turn in terms of literary analysis because of his strong awareness of architecture and spatial issues in his *feuilleton* articles, and on account of his numerous explicitly topographical portrayals of spaces in Berlin in the early 1930s. Prümme points to the spatial quality of Kracauer's writings, listing specific elements that are omnipresent in them, including the:

extreme Verräumlichung, das Hervorkehren der räumlichen Dimension, das Erschließen einer Stadt aus ihrer Topographie, aus der Linienführung der Straßen und Plätze, aus der Rhetorik ihrer Architektur.²¹⁶

Kracauer essentially employs spatial theory to open up the modern city to examination, and his writings have had a decisive influence on current theorists advocating an intensified focus on space as a category of analysis (the kind of spatial thinking highlighted by Prümme will also be applied to the analysis of Kracauer's work). His *feuilleton* articles are characterised by 'Raumbilder'.²¹⁷ portrayals of cafés, streets, bars, hotel lobbies, station underpasses, skyscrapers, employment exchanges, and pleasure grounds among others. The

²¹⁶ Karl Prümme, 'Die Stadt der Reporter und Kinogänger bei Roth, Brentano und Kracauer', in Scherpe (ed.), *Die Unwirklichkeit der Städte*, pp. 80–106 (p. 100).

²¹⁷ Siegfried Kracauer, 'Über Arbeitsnachweise', in Siegfried Kracauer, *Straßen in Berlin und anderswo* (Frankfurt a. M.: Suhrkamp, 1964), pp. 63–71 (p. 63).

significance Kracauer attaches to space is observable in his choice of titles, which almost always contain a spatial reference, for instance: 'Die Hotelhalle', 'Die Straße ohne Erinnerung', 'Die Unterführung', 'Kino in der Münzstraße', 'Unter der Oberfläche', 'Kurort Berlin', 'Alt-Berlin im Westen'.

Kracauer's awareness of spatial issues and the foregrounding of architectural space was, in the 1920s and 30s, in relation to, and in full knowledge of, other investigators of urban space. Of his contemporaries, Walter Benjamin is arguably the most significant theorist and analyst of the metropolitan experience. More specifically, Benjamin – also a philosopher, sociologist and essayist – considered space a central analytical tool in attempting to understand European modernity and its origins, which he located in nineteenth-century Paris.²¹⁸ In his comprehensive yet unfinished collection of studies of Parisian life in the nineteenth century, *Das Passagen-Werk* (started in 1927), Benjamin focuses on reconstructing the development of modernity in Paris, the city he in fact regarded as the capital of the nineteenth century.²¹⁹ Benjamin deliberately defines a period in history in spatial terms, and, by 'effectively "spatializing" time',²²⁰ is acknowledged by the geographer Derek Gregory as a central figure in the theorising of space. In particular, Benjamin identifies the arcade as the key architectural symbol of the nineteenth century, regarding it as the predecessor of the department store. He attributes its emergence and proliferation after 1822 to both the boom in textile trade, and the changes in building materials used in the construction of architectural structures.²²¹ The *Passagen-Werk* project essentially articulates how the social,

²¹⁸ For more detail on Benjamin's study of modernity, see David Frisby's chapter 'Walter Benjamin. The Prehistory of Modernity', in *Fragments of Modernity*, pp. 187–265. Benjamin began writing his *Passagen-Werk* in 1927 and it remained incomplete at the time of his death in 1940. The *Passagen-Werk* contains significant philosophico-historical studies, including the essay 'Das Kunstwerk im Zeitalter seiner Reproduzierbarkeit'. Apart from examining the eponymous *Passagen* (or arcades) in Paris, Benjamin's work also discusses the *flâneur*, department stores, streets, panoramas, advertising, and prostitution. Karl Schlögel terms Benjamin 'ein Denker der räumlichen Imagination' (Schlögel, p. 128), whose writings frequently engage with the phenomenon of the metropolis, and were generally characterised by spatiality. Benjamin is perhaps most associated with the field of literary criticism and was instrumental in the translation of the poetry of Charles Baudelaire, as well as the writings of Marcel Proust. The translation of the latter's work (including *À la recherche du temps perdu*) was partly undertaken in cooperation with Franz Hessel, whose work Benjamin also reviewed.

²¹⁹ Benjamin, 'Paris, die Hauptstadt des XIX. Jahrhunderts', in Benjamin, GS, vol. 5.1 (p. 45).

²²⁰ Derek Gregory, *Geographical Imaginations* (New York: Blackwell, 1993), p. 234.

²²¹ Benjamin, 'Paris, die Hauptstadt des XIX. Jahrhunderts', in Benjamin, *Gesammelte Schriften*, vol. 5.1, p. 45, p. 46.

cultural and urban changes effected by modernity found expression in architecture in the city.

Like Walter Benjamin, Kracauer's study of modernity is also rooted in the concept of urban spaces as revelatory. He saw in (urban) surfaces physical clues to social reality and change in the modern era. His interpretation of space as *the* medium by which the passage of time can be marked and read essentially constitutes one of the leading principles of the spatial turn of recent times.²²² As Jaimey Fisher states, space in Kracauer's work:

serves as a central category with which to register and track the changes wrought by modernity: space [...] becomes a central forum for the unfolding of history and its consequences.²²³

Kracauer views the modern city as an elaborate construct made up of a system of individual architectural works: streets, buildings and other physical structures. He is aware of the semantics of space and how architectural forms are loaded with cultural, social or political symbolism. They are the materialisation of past and present values that serve, and are imposed by, the ruling elite; urban spaces are shaped by, and an expression of, the social conditions of the time in which they were or are created. The architectural historian Gerwin Zohlen describes how, in Kracauer's writings, streets, houses 'und der gesamte Raum werden in der regierenden architektonischen Metaphorik zur materialisierten Erinnerung, die Architektur zur sedimentierten Geschichte'.²²⁴ The reference to the palimpsestic nature of the city (in the multiplicity of architectural spaces constructed in different historical eras) arguably does not always correspond with Kracauer's description of Berlin, especially his view of the city as one lacking in historical memory. Kracauer's article 'Straße ohne Erinnerung' (1932), for example, describes Kurfürstendamm, one of Berlin's main traffic arteries, as the epitome of the impermanence that typified Berlin's urban profile. The boulevard was forever renewing itself – shops and firms come and go constantly, altering the street's appearance –, and time fails to make an impression on the physical environment: 'Sonst bleibt das Vergangene an den

²²² Karl Schlögel in particular views history as having a defined spatial existence. His publication *Im Raume lesen wir die Zeit* is most indicative of his conceptualisation of spaces as revealing.

²²³ Fisher and Mennel, 'Introduction', in Fisher and Mennel (eds), *Spatial Turns*, p. 11.

²²⁴ Gerwin Zohlen, 'Schmugglerpfad. Siegfried Kracauer. Architekt und Schriftsteller', in Michael Kessler and Thomas Y. Levin (eds), *Siegfried Kracauer. Neue Interpretationen* (Tübingen: Stauffenberg, 1990), pp. 325–344 (p. 341).

Orten haften, an denen es zu Lebzeiten hauste; auf dem Kurfürstendamm tritt es ab, ohne Spuren zu hinterlassen'.²²⁵ According to Frisby, this lack of historical continuity corresponded to 'the transitory nature of the experience of modernity, whose concomitant is the destruction of historical memory'.²²⁶ For Kracauer, this specific urban space was the visualisation of modernity.

In his Weimar *feuilletons* on spaces in the city, Kracauer's mode of interpreting the urban environment is based primarily on the practice of physiognomy and the art of visual decoding by means of sustained surface reading. Instead of studying human countenances in order to draw conclusions about character, however, Kracauer reads the labyrinthine city: its urban formations and the exteriors of social spaces in which the public interact. In effect, he regards the spaces of the city as a text. Despite the reservations among some theorists towards the technique of 'reading' the city, Engelke notes how, like a number of his contemporaries (including Franz Hessel and Karl Scheffler), Kracauer saw 'im Akt der Lektüre ein geeignetes Verfahren zur Herstellung von Bedeutungen, zur Sichtbarmachung und Freilegung historischer Überlagerungen'.²²⁷ As noted above, his gaze penetrates beneath the surfaces of metropolitan spaces, to depth, where Kracauer believed reality lay hidden. In the much-cited opening paragraph of his essay 'Das Ornament der Masse', Kracauer elucidates this line of reasoning which is programmatic for the majority of his urban analyses of Berlin:

Der Ort, den eine Epoche im Geschichtsprozess einnimmt, ist aus der Analyse ihrer unscheinbaren Oberflächenäußerungen schlagender zu bestimmen als aus den Urteilen der Epoche über sich selbst. Diese sind als der Ausdruck von Zeittendenzen kein bündiges Zeugnis für die Gesamtverfassung der Zeit.²²⁸

In other words, visual signs of everyday phenomena signify concealed meaning, which can be decoded and synthesised into a picture of the city and of society at large. Especially the analysis of unplanned urban configurations

²²⁵ Siegfried Kracauer, 'Straße ohne Erinnerung', in Inka Müller-Bach (ed.), Siegfried Kracauer. *Schriften*, vol. 5.3 (Frankfurt a. M.: Suhrkamp, 1990), pp. 170–174 (p. 173).

²²⁶ See David Frisby, 'Deciphering the Hieroglyphics of Weimar Berlin', in Charles W. Haxthausen and Heidrun Suhr (eds), *Berlin: Culture and Metropolis* (Oxford: University of Minnesota Press, 1990), pp. 152–165 (p. 157).

²²⁷ Jan Engelke, *Kulturpoetiken des Raumes. Die Verschränkung von Raum-, Text-, und Kulturtheorie* (Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann, 2009), p. 274.

²²⁸ Siegfried Kracauer, 'Das Ornament der Masse', in Kracauer, *Das Ornament der Masse. Essays* (Frankfurt a. M.: Suhrkamp, 1963), pp. 50–63 (p. 50).

explains or reveals social reality more reliably than accounts or judgments of that era by, for example, planners of buildings, contemporary political opinion, writers, professors, statistics, or cultural commentators.²²⁹ Space is thus established as a vital component in the study of historical experience. Kracauer's approach to the interpretation of space can be traced to the socio-philosophical urban analysis carried out by Simmel at the turn of the twentieth century in Berlin. The focus on urban space in Simmel's work derives from the growth of cities in the mid to late nineteenth-century and the ensuing interest in the mechanisms of the modern metropolis, which, in the words of Anthony Vidler, generated 'a culture of interpretation dedicated to the study and explanation of [...] new urban phenomena and their social effects'.²³⁰ Simmel's analysis of the experience of the big city and urban culture was an attempt to understand 'the social conditions of modernity'.²³¹ In Simmel's theory of modernity the urban realm and social behaviour were interrelated and his influence on Kracauer can be seen in the latter's interpretation of modernity viewed through the prism of space. In Kracauer's writings, social spaces in the city, which comprise different layers, come to the fore. Each is capable of being read, in the process of which the reality of the epoch and its characteristics are unveiled. The examination of urban spaces and what they reveal about social reality – as well as cultural and political reality – will be shown to be a central aspect of the *feuilletons* of Joseph Roth, Gabriele Tergit and Kurt Tucholsky. Roth, for example, draws attention to marginal spaces in Berlin to materialise social conditions in the post-war city, while Tucholsky tracks political reality after the war – what he regards as the *lack* of historical shift in the country – by highlighting social and political behaviour both in the urban realm of Berlin, and beyond, in Germany's provinces. Tergit, though less inclined to draw attention to social or political concerns, draws on space and spatial categories to depict interwar Berlin, prompting new insights into the city in the Weimar era.

Siegfried Kracauer's *feuilleton* article 'Aus dem Fenster gesehen' (originally titled 'Berliner Landschaften')²³² was written and published in November 1931 in

²²⁹ See Stalder, p. 163; Mülder, p. 88.

²³⁰ Anthony Vidler, 'Agoraphobia: Spatial Estrangement in Georg Simmel and Siegfried Kracauer', *New German Critique*, 54 (1991), 31–45 (32).

²³¹ Vidler, p. 32.

²³² The difference between titles is striking. The earlier makes the subject matter quite explicit, while the later title foregoes a direct reference to Berlin.

Die Frankfurter Zeitung. I have selected this article for sample analysis because it exemplifies Kracauer's approach to the study of surfaces in Berlin by means of acute metropolitan observation and his concern with spatial considerations and spatiality. Kracauer interprets the city on the basis of one visual impression of an urban space. In this context, exposing the reality of Berlin cannot be separated from the analysis of its material form.

The article can be divided into three sections that combine literary imagery with analytical comment on the urban environment. The first considers the differences between two kinds of urban images or *Stadtbilder* – the planned and the fortuitous. The second passage goes on to describe a view that Kracauer has of one angle of the city from a window perspective whose location is described in detail. The last section depicts the appearance of the same terrain at night, before concluding that it is spontaneous urban images in Berlin that reveal the city in its uncontrived form, and for that reason present actual truth.

The starting point of Kracauer's *feuilleton* is the concept of the *Stadtbild*, specifically the assertion that one can distinguish between two types of urban formation: the kind that is 'bewußt geformt'²³³ and that which is 'absichtslos' (399) and simply *is*. The former, artificially arranged spatial figure is by implication the product of a human-driven process – the architect's or urban planner's vision made real. This manifests itself 'in Plätzen, Durchblicken, Gebäudegruppen und perspektivischen Effekten' (399). The allusion is to the representative value of spaces that are created with a specific aesthetic in mind (and thus have a predetermined effect), and which, according to Kracauer, 'der Baedeker gemeinhin mit einem Sternchen beleuchtet' (399). The latter, un-designed cityscapes are 'Geschöpfe des Zufalls' (399), and come into existence without forethought:

Wo immer sich Steinmassen und Straßenzüge zusammenfinden, deren Elemente aus ganz verschieden gerichteten Interessen hervorgehen, kommt ein solches Stadtbild zustande, das selbst niemals der Gegenstand irgendeines Interesses gewesen ist. Es ist so wenig gestaltet wie die Natur und gleicht einer Landschaft darin,

²³³ Siegfried Kracauer, 'Aus dem Fenster gesehen', in Inka Mülder-Bach (ed.), Siegfried Kracauer. *Schriften*, vol. 5.2 (Frankfurt a. M.: Suhrkamp, 1990), pp. 399–401 (p. 399). Future references to this source will be given in round brackets directly after the quotation in the main text.

daß es sich bewußtlos behauptet. Unbekümmert um sein Gesicht
dämmert es durch die Zeit. (399)

Kracauer's description betrays a spatial awareness that differs from the engagement with space by Roth, Tergit, and Tucholsky. As will be illustrated, the three authors deploy space in a number of ways in their writings to interpret the city (and the era), but they arguably do so less consciously than Kracauer. He, having presented the reader with his considered distinction between types of space, introduces the perspective suggested by the article title, and from which he describes the scene that unfolds before him: 'Vor meinem Fenster verdichtet sich die Stadt zu einem Bild, das herrlich wie ein Naturschauspiel ist' (399). The window perspective hints at the literary tradition of the artist-observer's privileged view from above. Kracauer is thus embedded in this particular aesthetic of precise viewing from an elevated angle, which was established in German literature by writers such as the Romantic author E.T.A. Hoffmann. His eponymous *Vetter* in *Des Vetters Eckfenster*, written in 1822, was reading social surfaces in Berlin more than a hundred years earlier. In Kracauer's article, the window motif serves a dual purpose. It defines how one space (outside) is seen from another space (inside), and can be regarded as a mediating device: it frames a particular view, and directs his gaze, even narrows his field of vision, which in turn determines the reader's relation to the depicted (outside) space, because our understanding of it is inevitably based on how Kracauer perceives the spatial images from his window perspective.

Kracauer describes the 'Standort' (399) of the window from which the city appears condensed into a picture: 'Er befindet sich hoch über einer unregelmäßigen Platzanlage' (399). In the following lines he highlights the particularities of the space:

Sie ['Platzanlage'- FM] kann sich unsichtbar machen, sie hat eine Tarnkappe auf. Mitten in einem großstädtischen Wohnviertel gelegen und Treffpunkt mehrerer breiter Straßen, entzieht sich der kleine Platz so sehr der öffentlichen Aufmerksamkeit, daß kaum jemand auch nur seinen Namen kennt. (399)

The square, despite its busy environment, remains entirely inconspicuous. Its ability to conceal itself lies – paradoxically – in the public nature of the space: the square is a spatial construction seldom if ever noticed by the commuters, shoppers, and users of public transport *because* they cross it daily. It is a purely functional space, not inhabited, and the only social and spatial practice

performed there is the passing by of one another. It conforms to Marc Augé's concept of a 'non-place',²³⁴ transitory and forgettable, and for this very reason it fails to enter their consciousness. The square's visibility results in its escaping notice.²³⁵ The concept of overlooked space is also of wider relevance in relation to the *feuilleton* articles of Roth, Tergit and Tucholsky. Roth in particular draws attention to invisible space, namely of the homeless and poor, who were arguably so present in Berlin's *Stadtbild* so as to become unseen by the public. Roth's depictions induce a shift in conceptions of this period, then and now, by highlighting how socio-economic reality is manifest in physical space.

Though writing about a real space, Kracauer omits the name and the precise whereabouts of the square (Berlin is not identifiable until later on in the text), since the article does not intend to provide a description of a Berlin landmark or symbol. Instead, the nameless square is emblematic of the type of urban form outlined in Kracauer's introductory paragraph: it conforms to the variety of *Stadtbild* 'das selber niemals der Gegenstand irgendeines Interesses gewesen ist' (399). Further, it is precisely the inadvertent urban image – the spontaneous spatial constellation free from representational, ideological rhetoric enciphered in its architecture – that Kracauer seeks to decode in order to expose a concealed reality (the real social conditions of modern life) and search for signs of modernity. In this context, Kracauer's observation from above exemplifies the surface-trope: he views the urban composition from a height to see what lies below the visible surface. The window glass arguably also represents a signifier of opacity and transparency, or surface versus depth.

Kracauer's observations are not static, but move systematically in space and in time. In the second section of his article, Kracauer's distanced

²³⁴ The anthropologist Marc Augé in 1995 wrote about so called *non-lieux*, or non-places, examples of which are provisional places, locations of transience, of 'solitary individuality, [...] the fleeting, the temporary and ephemeral'. See Marc Augé, *Non-Places. Introduction to an Anthropology of Supermodernity* (London: Verso, 1995), p. 78.

²³⁵ This perception is a feature of Kracauer's sociological writings. He uncovers the obvious, which has been overlooked for the very reason that it is plain to see. In his sociological study *Die Angestellten* (1929), for example, which examines the realities of working life for Berlin's new sector of white-collar workers in the era of rationalisation, he comments that they have never been the subject of study because they are so visible in public. He likens the mystery that surrounds salaried workers to the "Letter to her Majesty" in Edgar Allan Poe's tale: 'Durch seine Öffentlichkeit ist es, dem Brief Ihrer Majestät gleich, erst recht vor Entdeckung geschützt. Niemand bemerkt den Brief, weil er obenauf liegt.' See Siegfried Kracauer, *Die Angestellten. Aus dem neuesten Deutschland*, in Inka Mülder-Bach (ed.), Siegfried Kracauer, *Werke*, vol. 1 (Frankfurt a. M.: Suhrkamp, 2006), pp. 213–310 (p. 218).

perspective from the window gives way to a more panoramic view, and he evokes the physicality of the spatial image that forms before him:

Das Stadtbild [...], das bei diesen Plätzen beginnt, ist ein Raum von außerordentlicher Weite, den ein metallischer Eisenacker erfüllt. Er klingt von Eisenbahngleisen wider. Sie kommen aus der Richtung des Bahnhofs Charlottenburg hinter einer überlebensgroßen Mietshauswand hervor, laufen bündelweise nebeneinander und entschwinden zuletzt hinter gewöhnlichen Häusern. Ein Schwarm von glänzenden Parallelen, der tief genug unter dem Fenster liegt, um seiner ganzen Ausdehnung nach übersehen werden zu können. (399, 400)

The scenes observed in the wide-open space are marked by modern technology: there is the double emphasis of the metallic *and* iron fields of railway tracks that emerge from behind a larger than life-sized wall of an apartment block before disappearing in the distance, and references to trains, which signify movement, mobility and acceleration. Kracauer weaves a material account of the terrain with literary imagery: references to real places in the city, such as Charlottenburg station, give way to a more subjective but abstract interpretation of the space. There is a double remove as Kracauer, distanced from the scene by the glass window, now changes perspective and connects the industrial topography of the sections of the railway network with a child's vision:

Mit ihren vielen Signalmasten und Schuppen macht die Fläche beinahe den Eindruck eines mechanischen Modells, das ein Knabe, der irgendwo unsichtbar kniet, zum Experimentieren benutzt. Er läßt im Spiel die entzückenden bunten Stadtbahnzüge rasend schnell auf- und abgleiten, jagt einzelne Lokomotive hin und her und entsendet schwere D-Züge nach berühmten Städten wie Warschau und Paris, die gleich hinter der nächsten Ecke aufgebaut sind. (400)

Kracauer's vertical view renders a highly complex space more transparent, reading from it some of the features of modernity. He miniaturises them by adopting the gaze of a child upon a toy-town comprised of colourful trains, railway intersections, tunnels, signal masts, and far-away exotic destinations just around the corner. As noted previously, Kracauer perceived metropolitan spaces as being imbued with signification. The majority of urban inhabitants were, in his mind, unable to read and decipher them. This lack of awareness of the built environment's 'text' was, for Kracauer, characteristic of the modern world and metropolitan inhabitants. In the passage above, Kracauer attempts to elucidate the space for us, but does not depict the 'real' appearance of a

material space with definite contours; instead he condenses the expanse into a list of unconventional, metaphorical descriptions (seen once again from above). He removes the urban landscape from reality and as a result de-familiarises it for the reader (and urban citizen). Kracauer deconstructs an everyday image taken for granted and generates a different type of consciousness: his spatial depiction forces us to see a space, or to view a familiar geography anew, thereby revealing another layer or version of reality. In the same way that Kracauer's description of a particular space assists in influencing our understanding of Weimar Berlin, the writings of Roth, Torgit and Tucholsky will be interrogated in terms of spatial depiction and how we might adjust our perceptions of the city in light of this.

Kracauer goes on to observe a 'strip' of houses just visible on the periphery of his line of sight and that borders the 'eiserne Fläche' (400), framing it geometrically within the confines of his window. Meanwhile, his gaze also falls upon a radio broadcasting tower, which soars above the houses, 'ein senkrechter Strich, der mit der Reißfeder dünn durch ein Stück Himmel gezogen ist' (400). Kracauer again blends empirical information with fantasy images: the 'Rundfunkturn' (400) is a concrete Berlin landmark, but the absent simile in relation to the tower's appearance has its actually *being* a line drawn with a 'Reißfeder', not merely *looking* like one. The impression generated is dream-like, unreal, and a distinct aesthetic emerges from Kracauer's image analysis. He describes the nighttime appearance of the setting: 'Abends ist das ganze Stadtbild illuminiert. Verschwunden die Schienen, die Masten, die Häuser – ein einziges Lichterfeld glänzt in der Dunkelheit' (400). Seen from the window, modern artificial lighting produces a particular effect: the terrain has a changed appearance, and though illuminated, certain urban formations disappear from view. The intensity of the lights against the background of darkness accentuates the spatial relationship of Kracauer's window perspective to the outside, as distance and proximity, and reality and illusion, blend:

Die Lichter sind über den Raum verteilt, sie harren still oder bewegen sich wie an Schnüren, und vorne, zum Greifen nah, leuchtet ein blendendes Orange, mit dessen Hilfe eine Großgarage ihren Ruhm weithin verbreitet. Mitten aus dem Getümmel, das keine Tiefe hat, erhebt sich ein strahlender Baum: der Rundfunkturn (400).

As above, Kracauer's reading of the space is also a reading of modern society, where modernisation and technology have structured the physical environment:

the (advertising) lights, a petrol station and the radio tower (visual expression of rapid transmission) are hallmarks of the modern world. The terrain, defined in part by illuminations with a communicative function (to promote the presence of a petrol station) is termed a shallow 'Getümmel', returning to the interplay between surface and depth. Kracauer construes the space as representative of societal conditions of the epoch in its anonymity and lack of substance. His portrayal is arguably a social-philosophical critique of the Weimar era whose cultural life he perceived as being dominated by the effects of rapid modernisation and rationalisation. Kracauer's depiction is also exemplary in terms of how it invokes space to do so. Roth and Tucholsky also articulate their concerns about conditions in post-war Germany spatially: Roth depicts environments that reflect the social crisis he considered prevalent in Berlin, and Tucholsky criticises political circumstances by way of comparisons of Berlin with France, and with Germany's provinces.

Continuing the surreal quality of the scene, Kracauer describes one of the most modern topographical features of Berlin's cityscape, the radio tower, in figurative terms as:

ein strahlender Baum [...], der von seiner Spitze einen Lichtkegel rundum schickt. Unablässig kreisend tastet das Blinkfeuer die Nacht ab, wenn der Sturm heult, fliegt es über die hohe See, deren Wogen den Schienenacker umspülen. (400)

He draws further imaginary pictures from nature: an oceanic swell engulfs the fields of railway lines as the radio tower's spotlight lights up the darkness, akin to a lighthouse. The intertwining of the natural world (animate) with recognisable urban elements (inanimate) is a literary feature characteristic of the time: employing nature imagery helped convey the overwhelming impression of the metropolitan environment. The conflation of the two confirms Kracauer's idea that the inadvertent urban form equates to a 'Landschaft' (399), in part because it asserts itself unconsciously ('bewußtlos behauptet', 399). It also suggests that modern urban culture, as represented by the space, is not viewed as the negative opposite of country life: indeed, the synthesis of urban and natural imagery suggests approval.

The final lines return to the opening concept of unintentional urban images. Referring explicitly to the cityscape he has previously observed and depicted, Kracauer articulates in emphatic tones: 'Diese Landschaft ist ungestelltes

Berlin. Ohne Absicht sprechen sich in ihr, die von selber gewachsen sind, seine Gegensätze aus, seine Härte, seine Offenheit, sein Nebeneinander, sein Glanz' (400, 401). The accidental spatial form *is* Berlin: a protean construct of heterogeneity, contradictions, harshness, openness, simultaneity (he refers to this in part in the first paragraph: 'Steinmassen und Straßenzüge [...] aus ganz verschieden gerichteten Interessen'), and glamour. Kracauer shatters the illusion that the official image of Berlin – its reputation as a major metropolis, fast and sensational, that is projected by deliberately designed urban spaces – is anything other than a construct, intended to produce a particular impression. He is interested in the fortuitous form, which, to his mind, constitutes truth (and Berlin is still found to possess glamour, even in the images it produces unintentionally).

Given the centrality of spatial thinking to his reading of modernity, investigating Kracauer's depiction of urban space in his article permits an analysis of how *he* views space, but also demonstrates how Kracauer employs certain analytical 'tools' that conform exactly to what current scholars have asserted are the fundamental theories of the spatial turn. For example, Kracauer consciously analyses temporality (i.e. modernity and its repercussions) with the use of spatial categories, an approach promoted by Karl Schlögel as a valuable means of explaining history. Kracauer examines an everyday space on the basis of its materiality in order to establish a 'Gegenwartsdiagnose',²³⁶ to gain insight into the actual social situation in the era of urban modernity. He notably uses space to narrate time (as will be shown, this characteristic is also found in the works of Joseph Roth, Gabriele Tergit and Kurt Tucholsky). Further, Kracauer reveals that space has its own intentional or inadvertent rhetoric, is frequently strong in symbolism and outwardly transmits precise messages. Henri Lefebvre regarded the articulations by material form as typical of so-called "spaces of representation". In Kracauer's piece, the terrain he describes is also not simply a neutral background in which modernity unfolds. On the contrary, the urban form is seen to be unfixed, reflects and is concomitantly an agent of change. His analysis also shows the awareness and interest at the time in space – in Kracauer's case an explicit interest – which, given the serial, continuous nature of *feuilleton*

²³⁶ Zohlen, p. 342.

articles, allows us to assume that readers also recognised such interpretive tools to read and ‘unlock’ modernity.

In this thesis I will explore the similarly complex ways in which space, place and topographical features epitomise the Weimar capital and the modern mentality in the *feuilleton* articles of Roth, Tergit and Tucholsky. I aim to illustrate that reading their journalistic works in a spatial context – and employing the kind of spatial thinking Kracauer himself used to examine Berlin – aids our understanding of the interwar city in social, political and cultural terms.

CHAPTER TWO

MAPPING THE CITY: TYPICAL TOPOGRAPHIES IN THE BERLIN FEUILLETON

This chapter discusses the types of spaces that were written about with frequency in the 1920s and early 1930s *feuilleton*, and how these came to dominate public awareness of Weimar Berlin then and now. Moreover, it highlights the discernible difference between the cartographies evoked by well-established images of Berlin, for example in anthologies of Weimar *feuilletons* (which tend to produce generic maps of the city's 'highlights'), and the picture that emerges of the city upon reading individual authors' broader output. The stock locations – what one might term 'typical' urban spaces – detract from the more multifaceted mental maps of Berlin created by the journalistic oeuvres of Joseph Roth, Gabriele Tergit and Kurt Tucholsky.

2.1 The Prominence of Space

The historian Peter Fritzsche observes that, at the turn of the twentieth century, newspapers played a crucial role in the creation of a particular cartography of Berlin by repeatedly writing about details of the city's urban life and specific locations, and omitting others from their inventory. Once Berlin was on its way to becoming a national metropolis, formerly representative sites such as 'die klassische Prachtstraße Unter den Linden mit ihren Botschaften, Palästen und Ministerien'¹ receded in the journalistic imagination, and other urban areas deemed more characteristic of the burgeoning capital were given prominence. Newspapers restated time and again the elemental fascination exerted by central locations such as Potsdamer Platz, Friedrichstraße, Leipziger Straße or Tiergarten, and 'das entstehende Berlinbild ergab eine völlig neue Karte der öffentlichen Plätze, gesellschaftlichen Schlachtfelder und individuellen Schicksale'.² A similar conclusion can be drawn in relation to Weimar Berlin, a city that, in contemporary

¹ Fritzsche, *Als Berlin zur Weltstadt wurde*, p. 137.

² Ibid.

accounts, is conjured by way of, and associated with, precise, seemingly representative spaces. Berlin in the 1920s was a metropolis of over four million people. After the First World War its media scene expanded rapidly, furnishing an evolving information society with news and opinion. Topographical, architectural *feuilletons* were standard fare in the city's numerous newspapers and magazines, whilst novels from the Weimar period also exhibit a principal concern with Berlin's metropolitan spaces.³ Newspapers sought to capture the city's plurality and the post-war urban spectacle, and journalists were commissioned to provide in-depth portrayals of Berlin's entertainment and amusement venues, of the city's growing traffic, and the pace that characterised urban life.

Above all, it was the changing physical environment of the city that attracted literary interest in real topographical features. The passing of the *Groß-Berlin-Gesetz* in 1920 resulted in a westward expansion of the city and its core: formerly located in the areas of Tiergarten and Mitte (home to main arteries such as Leipziger Straße and Friedrichstraße), Berlin's centre shifted to the "New West", which included Kurfürstendamm and Tauentzienstraße in Charlottenburg and Schöneberg, areas that became independent districts of Greater Berlin. The creation of new buildings (including large department stores) and infrastructure (the expansion of the city's S- and U-Bahn), or transformation of existing formations, altered impressions of the city, which in turn affected the manner in which Berlin's topography was depicted. Jäger and Schütz outline how the 1920s *feuilleton* both conceived of and traced the new topography, while privileging spaces that were in some way perceived of as emblematic of the experience of the modern city and ignoring, like its predecessors twenty years before, 'Bezirke der politischen und traditionell orientierten Repräsentation'.⁴ The latter were seen as 'ausgetreten, abgenutzt, alltäglich'.⁵ The boulevard Unter den Linden, for instance, and all of its associated sights (opera, university, city palace) subsequently vanished 'aus der feuilletonistischen Topographie Berlins'.⁶

³ See, for example, Alfred Döblin's *Berlin Alexanderplatz*, Gabriele Tergit's *Käsebier erobert den Kurfürstendamm*, and Hans Fallada's *Kleiner Mann – was nun?*

⁴ Christian Jäger and Erhard Schütz, 'Nachwort', in Jäger and Schütz (eds), *Glänzender Asphalt*, pp. 335–348 (p. 341).

⁵ Jäger and Schütz, 'Nachwort', p. 342.

⁶ Ibid.

The German capital as a permanent construction site had been a literary topos since the nineteenth century. Michael Bienert notes how specific patterns of perception can be observed among writers interpreting 1920s Berlin and its environs. They tended to draw on a number of rhetorical conventions commonplace even at the time. These included the image of Berlin as a city of modernity, of speed and permanent change, amoral, amorphous and lacking in tradition.⁷ Where writers engaged with topographical features, they were inclined to focus on those urban spaces they believed typified such attributes,⁸ thus reinforcing them. For example, descriptions of Friedrichstraße commonly make reference to prostitution and loose morals, whilst Potsdamer Platz, as will be shown, is synonymous with traffic, tempo and, ultimately, with modernity. The act of highlighting motifs inextricably linked with particular locations lends the era and the city an identity. Portrayals of particular topographical features were repeated and propagated as part of the meta-text on Berlin, and helped determine the conception of the city. Nils Plath summarises the cyclical process whereby Berlin came to consist of an amalgamation of texts. Standard stereotypes about the city were promulgated and:

in Texten zitierbar gemacht, um dann abermals reproduziert zu werden in den Texten über die Texte, die damals zur Zirkulation gelangten in Form von journalistischen Berichten, Kurzprosa, Romanen, Briefen; heute ausgestellt, gestern bereits gelesen, auch morgen wieder Dokumente historischer Zeit- und Ortsaneignung, ad infinitum.⁹

The act of repeating precise images and emphasising certain topographical features in Berlin is a ritual that resulted in certain assumptions being made about it, and such beliefs endure. Jäger and Schütz also address the concept of place making by the journalistic media through their use of the terms ‘feuilletonistische Topographie’, or even ‘feuilletonistische Inszenierung’,¹⁰ to describe the particular

⁷ Bienert, *Die eingebildete Metropole*, p. 66, p. 67. For further details of the tradition (and impact) of external perceptions of Berlin, see Gerhard Brunn and Jürgen Reulecke (eds), *Metropolis Berlin. Berlin als Deutsche Hauptstadt im Vergleich Europäischer Hauptstädte 1870-1939* (Bouvier: Bonn, 1992).

⁸ Bienert, *Die eingebildete Metropole*, p. 66.

⁹ Nils Plath, ‘Vorbilder nachher: Berlin als Chicago, New York, nicht Paris’, in Wolfgang Asholt and Claude Leroy (eds), *Die Blicke der Anderen. Paris. Berlin. Moskau* (Bielefeld: Aisthesis, 2006), pp. 195–205 (p. 195).

¹⁰ Jäger and Schütz, *Städtebilder*, p. 36.

type of urban map created by writers, and illustrate the authority that *feuilletons* had in shaping perceptions. J. Hillis Miller proposes that the topography of a place does not exist in and of itself, waiting to be portrayed in words. The term does not merely denote distinctive features of scenery or a landscape. Instead, topography *generates* or brings forth particular attributes. Topography is in effect *created* – spaces are arguably only constructed, conjured, or given meaning through the use of language.¹¹ Scholars of the Weimar *feuilleton* and of urban portrayals in more general terms have investigated the extent to which writers influenced both the creation of urban spaces and the perception of Berlin (historically and current) by means of literary representation. Detlef Briesen, for example, notes: 'Images bestimmten und bestimmen die Vorstellungen über die Vergangenheit und Gegenwart von Städten [...]'.¹² Jäger and Schütz, meanwhile, state about contemporaries' understanding of Berlin during that period:

Berlin wurde zu dem, was seine Bewohner und seine Zeitgenossen als Berlin erfuhren und sich einbildeten, was sie faszinierte oder schreckte, zuerst und vor allem durch das Berlin, das die Zeitungen in Berlin entwarfen.¹³

The *Städtebilder* issued serially in the *feuilleton* are essentially literary expressions of how writers saw and interpreted, or treated Berlin. Sources cannot always be read as straightforward reflections of reality, as there was almost certainly a difference between what contemporary society knew to be 'real', based on empirical facts, and the single, subjective perspective offered by the *feuilletons*, which were at times vivid literary pieces that employed 'literarisch-ästhetisierende Darstellungsweisen'¹⁴ to describe Berlin. Whilst the *feuilleton* without doubt endeavoured to transmit details of everyday life and culture in the capital city to its readers, it was a medium that assisted in a type of 'Konstruktion der Wirklichkeit'.¹⁵

¹¹ J. Hillis Miller, 'Die Ethik der Topographie: Wallace Stevens', in Stockhammer (ed.), *Topographien der Moderne*, pp. 161–196 (p. 183). Miller's conceptualisation of space echoes Scherpe's notion of space and place as being mediated linguistically. Their respective formulations are at odds with Henri Lefebvre's notion of socially produced space.

¹² Detlef Briesen, 'Berlin. Die überschätzte Metropole. Über das System deutscher Hauptstädte zwischen 1850 und 1940, in Brunn and Reulecke (eds), *Metropolis Berlin*, pp. 39–77 (p. 39, p. 40).

¹³ Jäger and Schütz, 'Nachwort', p. 335.

¹⁴ Uecker, p. 376.

¹⁵ Jäger and Schütz, 'Nachwort', p. 336.

That *feuilleton* authors were the creators of a particular kind of reality on paper owed in part to the considerable pressure that was placed on journalists to write articles that matched the anticipation of the newspapers employing them. As commercial ventures, competition among papers was intense and writers, tied by their ‘materielle Abhängigkeit von der Zeitung’,¹⁶ were obliged to produce portrayals of life in Berlin that were considered marketable because they conformed to readers’ pre-existing impressions.¹⁷ Even with the measure of contrivance involved in the recording of some Berlin texts, urban portraiture was fundamental to the image-building process: continual thematisation of the city in the *feuilleton*, repeated representations of topographical features or cultural phenomena in Berlin resulted in a growing number of overlapping impressions among the readership. Certain narratives, motifs, and topoi created images, which – when repeated – consolidated conceptions of Berlin and in effect *became* the city.

During the mid-to late twenties ‘as many as two million tourists per year flocked to the city’,¹⁸ and the touristic perception was shaped in part by the image of Berlin propagated in the *feuilleton* and newspapers more generally. The examination and representation of certain spaces was thus also influenced in key ways by the blossoming of tourism. Karl Baedeker’s travel guide *Berlin und Umgebung* was the leading publication in the years prior to mass tourism. Visitors to Berlin arrived with the anticipation of viewing particular sights and places of interest, or *Sehenswürdigkeiten*. The handbook presented the reader with the essentials about Berlin, facilitating easy navigation of the capital ‘mit einem Minimum an Aufwand’.¹⁹ Jill Suzanne Smith notes that it included ‘recommendations for hotels and restaurants, detailed maps of the capital city’s streets and transportation system, and helpful blueprints of churches, monuments and museums [...]’.²⁰ Tourists to Berlin relied on the guide to point out the city’s “hotspots”, and those lacking the time to explore Berlin in detail instead singled out recognisable places gleaned in

¹⁶ Bienert, *Die eingebildete Metropole*, p. 17.

¹⁷ Bienert, *Die eingebildete Metropole*, p. 17, p. 18.

¹⁸ Jill Suzanne Smith, ‘Just How Naughty was Berlin? The Geography of Prostitution and Female Sexuality in Curt Moreck’s Erotic Travel Guide’, in Fisher and Mennel (eds), *Spatial Turns*, pp. 54–77 (p. 65).

¹⁹ Schlögel, p. 372.

²⁰ Smith, ‘Just How Naughty was Berlin?’, p. 67.

part from the *feuilleton*. They were drawn to famous landmarks and visual cues as points of orientation, and to sites of cultural and historical interest reported in newspapers. The case studies that follow below outline three spaces that received regular attention by *feuilleton* writers in the 1920s and counted among the touristic highlights: Gleisdreieck, Potsdamer Platz and Alexanderplatz. They – like Kurfürstendamm and Friedrichstraße – fall into the category of what Schütz defines as ‘specific magical locations’²¹ that nowadays elicit particular associations or are indeed synonymous with ‘the mythical Berlin’²² of the Weimar period. By investigating the portrayal of these sites, I highlight the difference between the cognitive maps that are generated of interwar Berlin by the repetitive treatment of spaces with representative function – that are highlighted time and again as a means of explaining the city overall, and propagated for example by today’s anthologies – and the cartography produced by the collected journalistic works of individual authors. In contrast to the quasi-touristic map of easily accessible sites included in compiled Berlin-texts (and which have influenced commonly held assumptions about the city), the spaces that make up Berlin in the works of Joseph Roth, Gabriele Tergit and Kurt Tucholsky are detailed and relay more complex information.

2.2 Stock Locations

A cursory glance at the content pages of Schütz’ and Jäger’s collection of Weimar *feuilletons*, *Glänzender Asphalt*, shows how articles are categorised and sub-categorised, guiding the reader by way of precise themes. Chief among them are Berlin’s topography and specific urban spaces. Significant locations include busy boulevards such as Kurfürstendamm and Friedrichstraße, as well as more tranquil settings of Tiergarten and Zoologischer Garten, and the lake Wannsee outside the city, where Berliners would go to enjoy the weekend. The Kurfürstendamm attracted both tourists and Berliners to its theatres, cabarets, restaurants, cinemas

²¹ Erhard Schütz, ‘Beyond Glittering Reflections of Asphalt: Changing Images of Berlin in Weimar Literary Journalism’, in Thomas W. Kriesche and Stephen Brockmann (eds), *Dancing on the Volcano: Essays on the Culture of the Weimar Republic* (Columbia, SC: Camden House, 1994), pp. 119–126 (p. 122).

²² Schütz, ‘Beyond Glittering Reflections’, p. 122.

and cafés. The provisional, unsettled character of the street throughout the 1920s and early 1930s was considered by Joseph Roth to be its one distinguishing feature.²³ Kracauer regarded Kurfürstendamm as similarly ephemeral. Bygone times are described as failing to leave a physical imprint on the aesthetics of the boulevard; the historical must make way for the new, for a constant process of evolution, and the Kurfürstendamm breaks with its past 'in knapp bemessenen Perioden wieder und wieder von Grund auf [...]'.²⁴ For Kracauer, the Kurfürstendamm symbolised modern existence and the transient nature of the metropolis overall.²⁵ A further important street on the Berlin map is Friedrichstraße, a thoroughfare in the historical centre of Berlin that linked 'Arbeiterviertel, Fabriken und Bahnhöfe'²⁶ at either end. Kiaulehn describes Friedrichstraße as having once been a 'Nachtschönheit'²⁷ at the turn of the twentieth century, on account of its famous illuminated advertising and the many bars that attracted custom with resplendent lighting. The Weimar *feuilleton*, meanwhile, takes up the theme of a boulevard whose former glamour has long worn off and lacks the modern elegance of the competing grand roads in the west of the city. Writers emphasise the seedy underbelly of amusement venues, and the all-day and night cafés that have lost their lustre but none of their ability to lure thrill-seekers from the provinces:

Das Café riecht verraucht und böse. Es ist alles noch so wie seit Jahren. Die abgessenen, fleckigen Polstersofas, die Lüsterkronen mit den leise klirrenden Glasspitzen und dem Fliegenschmutz noch vom Sommer, die breitschenkigen älteren Damen, die massiven Fettürme, auf den Rohrstühlen ihre Riesengesäße balancieren, und zwischen schlechtem Puderduft, krachenden Jazzbandradau und Huchgekreisch, verlebte Lehrlingsvisagen, quellende Provinzgesichter, von einem leichten Aschgrau der Begierde überzogen [...].²⁸

Friedrichstraße, known for its blatant prostitution, was one of the areas that conferred upon Berlin the reputation as a den of iniquity. The thematic emphasis

²³ See Joseph Roth, 'Der Kurfürstendamm', in Klaus Westermann (ed.), Joseph Roth. *Werke*, vol. 3 (Cologne: Kiepenheuer & Witsch, 1989), pp. 98–100.

²⁴ Kracauer, 'Straße ohne Erinnerung', p. 173.

²⁵ For further detail, see Frisby, *Fragments of Modernity*, pp. 139–141.

²⁶ Fritzsche, *Als Berlin zur Weltstadt wurde*, p. 137.

²⁷ Walther Kiaulehn, *Berlin. Schicksal einer Weltstadt* (Munich and Berlin: Biederstein, 1958, repr. 1968), p. 55.

²⁸ Manfred Georg, 'Mit Albert Unterwegs. Durch das unsichtbare Berlin', in Jäger and Schütz (eds), *Asphalt*, pp. 143–148 (p. 143).

given by 1920s *feuilleton* writers to certain sites, as mentioned above, can be read as genuine fascination among the readers and writers alike. In the following section I explore in greater detail the depictions in *feuilleton* articles of Gleisdreieck, Potsdamer Platz and Alexanderplatz. The rationale for selecting these sites for examination is that they appear to epitomise Berlin. The metropolis is in turn regarded as inherently linked with modernity (see Simmel), a complex construction that is intertwined with urban culture and its characteristics, including technology, traffic, urban chaos, and a social awareness of the problems arising from the era of modernity. Gleisdreieck, Potsdamer Platz and Alexanderplatz correspond to precisely these associations. Gleisdreieck, in addition to being a functioning station, in the *feuilleton* becomes a metaphor for the era's fascination with, and concurrent concern about, the technological age and, by extension, with modernity. The public square Potsdamer Platz is a byword for traffic and chaos, facets thought to be synonymous with modernity. Finally, Alexanderplatz is both a central traffic hub and social space that signifies confrontation (writers encounter hardship, the human cost of modernity), and is representative of Berlin itself.²⁹ The common images connected with these places – brought into being by the *feuilleton* and consolidated through reiteration in anthologies – have played a crucial role in influencing present-day perceptions of Weimar Berlin.

2.3 Gleisdreieck

The term Gleisdreieck refers to the railway-station and intersection in the district of Kreuzberg, and the industrial complex in which it is situated. In the 1920s, Gleisdreieck was an important literary topos and written about primarily in connection with the urban experience and the arrival of the realm of new technology. 1920s writers regularly portrayed Gleisdreieck as a menacing presence in the *Stadtbild*, an image that owed much to the sheer dimensions of the terrain, whose vast intersecting triangle of railway lines dwarfed human scale.³⁰ It

²⁹ See also artistic impressions of Ernst Ludwig Kirchner who painted specific places in Berlin, including Potsdamer Platz, Hallesches Tor, Brandenburger Tor, Nollendorfplatz, and Belle-Alliance-Platz.

³⁰ In his 1929 chronicles, Franz Hessel explores the surroundings of Gleisdreieck, commenting on its position above 'dem gewaltigen eisernen Spinnennetz von Schienensträngen [...], auf

was a major railway traffic junction, a place of convergence for the Berlin's S-and U-Bahn, as well as for international and domestic passenger transport and freight trains.³¹ Michael Bienert describes both the delight and alarm of contemporary passengers who passed through Gleisdreieck station on their daily journeys through the city. He refers, for example, to the thrill on the one hand of travelling on elevated rails through the open scenery. On the other hand, the voyager (and eye-witness at street level) experienced a shock at the unusual sight and sensation of the train passing through, at first-floor level, a large arch in the wall of an apartment block in Bülowstraße on its way to Gleisdreieck: 'Die Wagen rasten auf die fünfstöckige Stuckfassade eines bürgerlichen Hauses zu und durchquerten es in Höhe der ersten Etage'.³² Gleisdreieck was an attractive space for writers to engage with, since the recognition factor among Berliners facilitated easy identification with the subject. This in turn enabled *feuilleton* authors to construct further meaning around the topic; to juxtapose the banality of daily life and the commute – during which Gleisdreieck was a mere stop en route to a different place – with more complex subjects, for example, the ascendancy of technology and the social effects wrought by modern industrial techniques.

Joseph Roth's article 'Bekenntnis zum Gleisdreieck' from 1924 (published in the *Frankfurter Zeitung*) is a key example of the *feuilleton*'s role in constructing a particular image of Berlin, and of how a place name was able to conjure a range of predexisting associations. Roth's text initially conveys an impression of 'Technikeuphorie',³³ with the opening lines revealing a fascination with, and

denen von Güter-, Fern-, und Untergrundbahnen Dampgestoßenes und elektrisch Gleitendes zusammenströmt'. See Hessel, *Spazieren in Berlin*, p. 154. Alexander Dolinin's analysis of Boris Pasternak's poem 'Gleisdreieck' (1923) also highlights the negative associations elicited by the Gleisdreieck intersection. Dolinin refers to the poem's inclusion of 'a number of stock images that in the discourse of the 1920s acquired fixed symbolic pertaining to the doom of Western civilization'. Alexander Dolinin, 'The Stepmother of Russian Cities'. Berlin of the 1920s through the Eyes of Russian Writers', in Gennady Barabtarlo (ed.), *Cold Fusion: Aspects of the German Cultural Presence in Russia* (New York and Oxford: Berghahn, 2000), pp. 225–240 (p. 234).

³¹ For details on the development of Gleisdreieck, see Jeanne Riou, 'Joseph Roth's "Bekenntnis zum Gleisdreieck": Technology, Experience, and the Feuilleton in the 1920s', in Christian Emden and David Midgley (eds), *Science, Technology and the German Cultural Imagination. Papers from the Conference 'The Fragile Tradition'*, Cambridge 2002, vol. 3 (Bern: Peter Lang, 2005), pp. 157–179 (p. 158–161).

³² Bienert, *Die eingebildete Metropole*, p. 27.

³³ Christian Jäger, 'Wien als Versprechen, Berlin als Hoffnung', in John Warren and Ulrike Zitzlsperger (eds), *Vienna meets Berlin. Cultural Interaction 1918-1933*, British and Irish Studies

accession to, the potential of machinery to wield control. Gleisdreieck is described as ‘Sinnbild und Anfangs-Brennpunkt eines Lebenskreises und phantastisches Produkt einer Zukunft verheißenden Gewalt’.³⁴ Roth presents the terrain as an essential urban organism, vital to the very existence of Berlin. It is the epicentre and source of the city’s life force. He merges the concepts of nature and technology, human qualities and the inanimate world, metaphorically describing the industrial form of Gleisdreieck as an ‘eiserne Landschaft’.³⁵ He points to its being analogous to the human heart; the environment generates and “feeds” the city with energy, which in turn courses through ‘die großen glänzenden, eisernen Adern’.³⁶ As the *feuilleton* develops, however, it moves beyond being an affirmative interpretation of modern technology, of which Gleisdreieck is a symbol. Roth subverts the anticipation of a *Bekenntnis* by playing with imagery, anthropomorphising machinery and contrasting the authority of the automated, industrial setting of Gleisdreieck with the fragility of human beings, who appear marginal and insignificant:

Wie eine kleine Spielzeugschachtel sieht jenes Häuschen aus, das dem Wächter, dem Menschen gehört. So geringfügig ist alles, was sich darin durch ihn, mit ihm abspielt, so nebensächlich [...]. Dürfen die kleinen Herzschräge noch vernehmbar bleiben, wo der dröhnende einer Welt betäubt?³⁷

Roth’s *feuilleton* is a critical response to the era’s enthrallment to industrial modernity, rapid speed and progress, and Gleisdreieck comes to symbolise a world already machine-driven: ‘So sieht das Herz einer Welt aus, deren Leben Radriemenschwung und Uhrenschlag, grausamer Hebeltakt und Schrei der Sirene ist’.³⁸ The overall space of Gleisdreieck allows Roth to address themes that were prevalent at the time, including the topic of alienation in the face of rapidly evolving technology and its brutalising potential. One passage describes the visible impact of technology and man’s apparent insignificance, his dispensability, in the industrial process:

in German Language and Literature, 41 (Bern: Peter Lang, 2005), pp. 125–137 (p. 133).

³⁴ Roth, ‘Bekenntnis zum Gleisdreieck’, p. 218.

³⁵ Roth, ‘Bekenntnis’, p. 219.

³⁶ Roth, ‘Bekenntnis’, p. 218.

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ Ibid.

[...] da wandelt ein uniformierter Mann, mitten zwischen den verwirrenden Systemen der Geleise, winzig ist der Mensch, in diesem Zusammenhang nur wichtig als Mechanismus. Seine Bedeutung ist nicht größer als die eines Hebels, seine Wirksamkeit nicht weitreichender als die einer Weiche. In dieser Welt gilt seine menschliche Ausdrucksmöglichkeit weniger als die mechanische Zeichengebung eines Instruments. Wichtiger als ein Arm ist hier ein Hebel, mehr als ein Wink ein Signal, hier nützt nicht das Auge, sondern die Laterne, kein Schrei, sondern der heulende Pfiff des geöffneten Ventils [...].³⁹

Roth's article articulates uncertainties about an overly rational, fragmented civilisation. Michael Bienert and Jeanne Riou have written extensively about Roth's contribution (Riou outlines how the Gleisdreieck attained its significance among contemporary writers as being a 'symbol of the city')⁴⁰ and this section does not seek to add to their findings, but instead posits the notion that Gleisdreieck does not necessarily constitute a representative space within Roth's oeuvre. His description of the station and its meaning is programmatic and can be interpreted as conforming to the cultural critical stance that Roth adopts towards modernity throughout much of his work. Indeed, a de-contextualised reading of the article overshadows the fact that Roth employs near-identical motifs and language in both earlier and subsequent analyses of modern technology and its impact on human beings and the natural environment. As Bienert notes, Roth's earlier text 'Tote Welt', published in *Berliner Börsen-Courier* in 1922, reflects along parallel lines on the nature of an empty railway station, and features similar contemplation of how new technology depends on, but ultimately divests itself of, human involvement.⁴¹

Die Schienen glitten schimmernd, langgezogene Bindestriche zwischen Land und Land. [...] Und an den Wegrändern sprossden Wächter in die Höh' und erblühten grün und leuchtend. Das Wunderbare erfüllte sich dank einem mathematischen System. Der Zauber hatte ausgerechnete und genaue Fahrpläne zur Voraussetzung. Ein Fahrplan hing an der Wand. Standen darauf Züge verzeichnet, so fuhren sie ab. Die Hebel bewegten sich selbstständig, der Dampf entzischte geöffneten Ventilen, und alles geschah von selbst.⁴²

³⁹ Roth, 'Bekenntnis', p. 219.

⁴⁰ See Riou, 'Joseph Roth's 'Bekenntnis zum Gleisdreieck'', in Emden and Midgley (eds), *Science, Technology and the German Cultural Imagination*, p. 170.

⁴¹ See Bienert, *Die eingebildete Metropole*, p. 53.

⁴² Joseph Roth, 'Tote Welt', in Roth, *Werke*, vol. 1, pp. 731–733 (p. 732).

In 1930 Roth diagnoses in more explicit terms the threat he perceived technology to pose to man's existence. In his series of journalistic letters reporting on his travels in the Harz mountain range in northern Germany, Roth visits the so-called Leunawerke, a chemical industrial complex, whose construction and expansion he blames for the death of the small town Runstedt bei Merseburg. Addressing an imagined correspondent, he writes: 'Hielten Sie wirklich einmal und stiegen Sie hier aus, Sie würden sehen, wie mörderisch der Kampf ist, den die Technik gegen das Land führt. Hier vollzieht sich der Untergang der Welt [...]'.⁴³ His observations expressed in 'Bekenntnis' can thus be considered one facet of a larger theme that materialises in his oeuvre time and again, and forms part of his image-creation. Roth's map of Berlin, if assembled from his total works, takes little notice of Gleisdreieck, and 'Bekenntnis' thereby loses some of the significance attached to it as a vital constituent part of Roth's construction of the city.

Hans Kafka's article 'Tausendundein Waggon. Gleisdreieck, morgens', published in *Berliner Tageblatt* in 1929, is a lesser-known text about the station, and presents Gleisdreieck as a territory that is both confused and confusing ('Bahnhof und Bahnhofsanlagen – der ganze Apparat ist unklar').⁴⁴ The *feuilleton* opens with a correction of an apparently misguided perception on behalf of an imaginary reader that Gleisdreieck is 'merely' a station: 'Bahnhof – das sagst du so leicht. Aber was du dir darunter vorstellen mußt, ist ein schwieriger Brocken fremdartigen Elementes'.⁴⁵ Kafka uses this as his point of departure for establishing the station as 'other'; it is transformed from something familiar into an unknown quantity. Its vastness is expressed by a host of verbs that transmit a sense of its dynamism and associated noise: 'das rasselt, summt, hastet, stößt, stöhnt, eilt, schreit, pfeift, flackert, faucht, drängt und treibt'.⁴⁶ No longer just a station, the space is depicted as being alive with unceasing activity, filled with 'Menschenmassen'⁴⁷ who arrive from all directions. Like a central organ, Gleisdreieck "pumps" or dispatches people into the city, the heart metaphor a

⁴³ Joseph Roth, 'Der Merseburger Zauberspruch', in Roth, *Werke*, vol. 3, pp. 275–281 (p. 277).

⁴⁴ Hans Kafka, 'Tausendundein Waggon. Gleisdreieck, morgens', in Jäger and Schütz (eds), *Asphalt*, pp. 63–66 (p. 65).

⁴⁵ Kafka, 'Waggon', p. 63.

⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷ Ibid.

literary trope that Roth also avails himself of in his article about Gleisdreieck.

Industrial architecture such as Gleisdreieck is regarded as an aesthetic phenomenon in the 1920s *feuilleton*, and the impact of technology, 'die bis dahin unvorstellbare Konzentration technischer Apparaturen im Stadtbild',⁴⁸ is seen to have altered Berlin's urban topography in significant ways. Kafka perceives the railway intersections as a dominant visual feature of the landscape in the vicinity of Gleisdreieck, underscored by his inclusion of an image of the U-Bahn having to evade the station-complex by driving 'mit einem Satz schräg und gegen den Himmel'.⁴⁹ Berlin's overhead railway tracks were a visual reminder of the city's expanding transport system and the functional aesthetics that changed the city's contours. Kafka's article displays a preoccupation with the apparently enormous dimensions of the industrial landscape created by Gleisdreieck. In a series of questions the writer speculates with pronounced bewilderment about the origin of the terrain and of the manifestations of industrial space overall:

Handelt es sich um eine grandiose Architektur in mehreren Etagen, die mit einer Formel alles packt, Fahrbahnen und Schienenwege in großer Zahl, Speicherbauten, Lagerplätze und sogar den Hafen am Landwehrkanal? Ein einziger Wurf – und all das war da? Oder wuchs es organisch?⁵⁰

The dichotomy of this man-made technology by some means being the product of natural, 'organisch' growth here accentuates its *unnatural* quality. Karl Prümm points out that, by the mid-1920s, the practice of highlighting 'die verschärften Gegensätze von Belebtem und Unbelebtem, von Mensch und Maschine, Technik und humaner Substanz'⁵¹ was central to contemporary analysis seeking to define the essence of modernity. Kafka also employs the natural-unnatural binary in his vision of one aspect of modernity, announcing that the inorganic has not yet assumed total command over nature. The technical setting of Gleisdreieck, he notes, retains a small number of corners that are characterised by peaceful

⁴⁸ Bienert, *Die eingebildete Metropole*, p. 34.

⁴⁹ Kafka, *Waggons*, p. 64. Imagery of the U-Bahn shooting out from the ground into the heights is a recurring motif in 1920s *feuilletons*. See, for instance, both Ferdinand Timpe's 'Die Straße' in Jäger and Schütz, *Asphalt*, pp. 47–48, and Marcellus Schiffer's 'Berliner Ansichten', in Jäger and Schütz, *Asphalt*, pp. 51–55.

⁵⁰ Kafka, 'Waggons', p. 65.

⁵¹ Prümm, 'Die Stadt der Reporter und Kinogänger', in Scherpe (ed.), *Die Unwirklichkeit der Städte*, p. 87.

neglect: 'Bäume sind gewachsen und arme Grasflecke – so schleicht sich das Unbeabsichtigte immer noch organisch herein. Alles ist halb gewachsen und halb konstruiert; alles ist nur halb – ein romantisches Gebiet!'⁵²

The 'exoticism' of Gleisdreieck perceived by Kafka had very little to do with the everyday experience of commuters and their predictable daytime routine. His is, however, a paradigmatic portrayal of a space associated with the experience of modernity. Central to his account is the conflicted reaction towards the promise of the automation of life and potential erosion of humaneness. Kafka's *feuilleton*, for example, has a coda that includes a death motif. He portrays one forlorn train carriage at Gleisdreieck standing 'auf einem Nebengeleise und im Ruhestand',⁵³ and ruminates at length upon the likely reason for its retirement in a lay-by. In the article's closing lines it transpires that the carriage's only remarkable feature is a bent iron rod. It had been the site of a man's suicide, and his leap from the wagon 'hat diese Stange zu einer Kurve ausgekrümmt'.⁵⁴ This detail links Gleisdreieck with social crisis, the suicide arguably viewed as symptomatic of life in the big, modern city, or a projection of the fears about the loss of humanity inherent in the era of rapid transition. The station and its surroundings are elevated beyond being simply a physical location, but are imbued with added, if more abstract, significance. In Kafka's article, Gleisdreieck becomes a shortcut to a particular mindset that interprets the station as *the* demonstration of technological dominance, which was a central motif in literature of the interwar period.

2.4 Alexanderplatz

Alexanderplatz in East Berlin constitutes one of the most evocative Berlin place-names. After Potsdamer Platz, the square was the second largest traffic intersection in the 1920s: trams, over- and underground trains, and buses shuttled Berliners across the city. Named after the Russian Tsar Alexander 1st in 1805 in honour of his visit to the city, the area grew exponentially during the early twentieth century. The department stores Tietz and Wertheim opened large outlets at

⁵² Kafka, 'Waggons', p. 65.

⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁴ Kafka, 'Waggons', p. 66.

Alexanderplatz, attracted by the large volume of people traversing the vicinity on public transport, and in 1927 plans to expand the U- and S-Bahn networks transformed the area into a sizeable building site. Alexanderplatz was an expression of the modern city, with its urban drama and pronounced sense of restlessness, an attribute that arguably defined its existence more than anything else. Alexanderplatz was a transitory space with a dynamic of its own, and part of the public consciousness because of ambitious (though never fully realised) urban development schemes to redesign the square to facilitate the increased traffic, and to standardise its architecture.⁵⁵ Alexanderplatz was a central metaphor for what Siegfried Kracauer referred to as 'geschichtsloser Wandel':⁵⁶ the process of perpetual reconstruction that was perceived as an idiosyncrasy of Berlin at the time. Driven not by historical development but by a famed impulse to metamorphose – erasing its past and imagining itself anew –, the image of Alexanderplatz as the epitome of Berlin's inconstancy was a 1920s literary convention. Franz Hessel chronicled the changes to the square, describing 'die Zäune breiter Baustellen und tiefaufgerissener Erdlöcher'⁵⁷ typical of Alexanderplatz in the late 20s, and queried: 'Lohnt's noch, vom heutigen und gestrigen Alexanderplatz zu sprechen? Er ist wohl schon verschwunden, ehe diese Zeilen gedruckt werden.'⁵⁸ Alexander Graf Stenbock-Fermor (1902–1972) notes in his article 'Berlin: Straßen, Laubhütten, Demonstranten' (1931) how building works had by that time been concluded, but he reminds readers of how, not too long ago, the ground had been:

[...] überall aufgerissen. Wie eine Goldgräberstadt in amerikanischen Filmen sah das aus: Holzhütten, Zäune, Schutt- und Sandhaufen, Bohlen, Bretter, Krane, Ketten, dazwischen Arbeiter, die schippten und hackten, die Balken trugen, Karren schoben. Die Oberfläche hat sich wieder geschlossen, nur an einigen Stellen wird noch gebuddelt. Doch stehen Bretter davor und der Verkehr bleibt ungestört.⁵⁹

To Kracauer, this public square is, among other things, a place of paradox. In his

⁵⁵ See Ruth Glatzer, *Berlin zur Weimarer Zeit. Panorama einer Metropole 1919-1933* (Berlin: Siedler, 2000), pp. 167–177.

⁵⁶ Kracauer, 'Straße ohne Erinnerung', p. 173.

⁵⁷ Hessel, p. 181.

⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁹ Alexander Stenbock-Fermor, 'Berlin: Straßen, Laubhütten, Demonstranten', in Jäger and Schütz (eds), *Asphalt*, pp. 173–181 (p. 173).

article 'Der neue Alexanderplatz' (1932) he describes the efforts to introduce a system into the labyrinthine underground railway complex as unsuccessful and the fault of 'Ordnungsfanatismus',⁶⁰ which hinders rather than helps the orientation of passengers:

Die Bahnhöfe sind in verschiedenen Farben gekachelt und außerdem, der besseren Übersichtlichkeit wegen, mit Buchstaben bezeichnet. Obwohl aber die Farben und Buchstaben an allen möglichen Stellen auftauchen, um die Suchenden auf den rechten Weg zu führen, ist es doch außerordentlich schwierig, den gesuchten Punkt auch wirklich zu finden.⁶¹

Above ground, Kracauer notes the new office spaces whose imposing dimensions are expressed semantically: 'zwei riesige Büro-Hochhäuser, die wie eine Wallmauer aussehen'⁶² dominate one side of the square. Meanwhile, the other side of Alexanderplatz is portrayed as 'weit offen'⁶³ and, far from being utilised for commercial interests, is depicted as being invaded by the masses of impoverished urban districts that lay east of the square:

Ganze Stadtteile drängen aus dem Osten heran, und zu jedem gehört ein eigener Straßenzug, dem der Blick vom Platz aus folgen kann. Diese Straßen graben sich immer tiefer ins graue Elend hinein, das sie zuletzt verschlingt.⁶⁴

As Kracauer's statement suggests, Alexanderplatz in the 1920s and early 1930s is generally associated with the urban poor. It was the gateway to both the working class districts of Prenzlauer Berg (in the north) and Friedrichshain (in the east), and the so-called Scheunenviertel, an impoverished area inhabited by mostly Eastern European Jews, and which lay just northwest of Alexanderplatz (more detail of which follows in Chapter 3.4.2). The majority of portrayals of Alexanderplatz in the 1920s *feuilleton* link the space, and especially the streets adjacent to it, with crime, prostitution, and twilight existences, elements of which are famously portrayed in Alfred Döblin's novel *Berlin Alexanderplatz*. The square became one of the city's focal points for journalists seeking to convey the everyday experiences of those

⁶⁰ Siegfried Kracauer, 'Der neue Alexanderplatz', in Inka Müller-Bach (ed.), *Siegfried Kracauer. Schriften*, vol. 5.3 (Frankfurt a. M.: Suhrkamp, 1990), pp. 150–154 (p. 152).

⁶¹ Kracauer, 'Alexanderplatz', p. 151.

⁶² Kracauer, 'Alexanderplatz', p. 150.

⁶³ Kracauer, 'Alexanderplatz', p. 153.

⁶⁴ Ibid.

living in different social realms.

In his memoirs of 1920s Berlin, Walther Kiaulehn describes how Berlin was divided into many individual quarters with no discernible official borders: 'Im Stadtplan [...] waren die Viertel nicht verzeichnet. [...]. Die Grenzen waren fließend, und meist ging ein Viertel ins andere über'.⁶⁵ Spatial segregation in Berlin was, according to Bienert, less noticeable than in other cities, and different social groups lived close to each other.⁶⁶ These observations are generated in part by portrayals of Alexanderplatz in the 1920s *feuilleton*: writers note the proximity of impoverished quarters to wealthier lifestyles and frequently describe Alexanderplatz as a crossing point where all class categories converge ('Am Alexanderplatz treffen sich die vielen Welten').⁶⁷ At the same time, however, *feuilleton* articles are notable for the distanced relationship between the writer and their subject. It is predominantly materially well-off authors based in the *bürgerlich* milieu of West Berlin, or foreign visitors to the city, who routinely undertake explorations of Alexanderplatz and its surroundings.⁶⁸ Their readings tend to accentuate how this part of Berlin is a world away from what they are accustomed to. Alexanderplatz is the epitome of 'otherness', and writers provide a sense that they are transgressing the limits of their personal maps by entering the East. The emphasis is on conveying difference, on presenting an 'authentically' deprived, and somewhat sordid topography. Alexander Graf Stenbock-Fermor completes his tour of Alexanderplatz in 1931. He passes the building sites that mark the area in the early 1930s, and observes the streets in the poverty-stricken Scheunenviertel. He notes the small cinemas that provide homeless people with shelter, the prostitutes wandering the street, 'Dirnen mit ihren Freunden, Schofföre, Kleinhändler, Leute, die in der Nacht zu tun haben'.⁶⁹ Finally he tells of his experience of attending a so-called 'Witwenball' in the 'graue eintönige Straßen',⁷⁰ near Jannowitzbrücke, east of

⁶⁵ Kiaulehn, p. 477.

⁶⁶ Bienert, *Die eingebildete Metropole*, p. 140.

⁶⁷ Stenbock-Fermor, 'Berlin', p. 181.

⁶⁸ These include French journalist Pierre Mac Orlan who depicted his experience of Alexanderplatz in the early 1930s. See Pierre Mac Orlan, 'Das Elend ist im Innern, hinter der kalten Pracht der Häuser', in Margarete Zimmermann and Gilda Rodeck (eds), *"Ach, wie gut schmeckt mir Berlin". Französische Passanten im Berlin der zwanziger und frühen dreißiger Jahre* (Berlin: Das Arsenal, 2010), pp. 184–197.

⁶⁹ Stenbock-Fermor, 'Berlin', p. 174.

⁷⁰ Stenbock-Fermor, 'Berlin', p. 178.

Alexanderplatz. Stenbock-Fermor eventually returns to West Berlin and concludes his article with the words:

Als ich am Wittenbergplatz ausstieg, war ich unter völlig anderen Menschen. Es ist seltsam in Berlin: man steigt irgendwo in die Untergrundbahn, fährt einige Stationen weiter, steigt aus – eine andere Welt.⁷¹

Otto Alfred Palitzsch (1896–1944) makes a near identical observation in *his* exploration of Alexanderplatz: ‘Aus einer Welt stolpert man blindlings in eine andere’.⁷² Such responses to the environment of Alexanderplatz – with the accent on contrast between districts – contributed to the paradigm of East Berlin as a mysterious and unfamiliar terrain. The journalists’ accounts of what they witnessed arguably offered their middle class readers the occasional frisson of hearing reports about impoverished districts.

Palitzsch published the aforementioned article ‘Reise nach dem Osten’ in the *Vossische Zeitung* in 1928. His portrayal is mostly limited to being a depiction of the ‘unpleasant social details’⁷³ of East Berlin. The title and the opening paragraph expressly announce the great journey he has undertaken geographically and socially, voyaging by bus between Kurfürstendamm in West Berlin and Alexanderplatz in the east of the city. Palitzsch re-orientates himself in time and space, and though the ‘weite Reise’⁷⁴ lasted only half an hour, his arrival at Alexanderplatz generates a strong sense of adventure. He conforms to Anke Gleber’s conception of the writer who becomes ‘a tourist to a reality of living and working situations that ultimately remain alien and incomprehensible to him’.⁷⁵ Indeed, Palitzsch defines himself as a ‘fremder Reisender’ (169) in his own city, and remarks on the sensory experience of breathing ‘eine andere Luft [...] in der Stadt, in der man selber wohnt’ (169), thereby putting distance between himself and the conditions he encounters in the area. Palitzsch’s interest lies with the

⁷¹ Stenbock-Fermor, ‘Berlin’, p. 181.

⁷² Otto Alfred Palitzsch, ‘Reise nach dem Osten. Berlin jenseits des Alexanderplatzes’, in Jäger and Schütz (eds), *Asphalt*, pp. 169–172 (p. 170).

⁷³ Gleber, p. 82.

⁷⁴ Palitzsch, ‘Reise nach dem Osten’, p. 169. Future references from this source will be indicated by page numbers in round brackets directly after the quotation in the main text.

⁷⁵ Gleber, p. 82.

‘Berlin jenseits des Alexanderplatzes’, and no attention is therefore paid to the actual square of activity at Alexanderplatz (or its architecture); it is in fact dismissed as being ‘charakterlos wie eine Bahnhofshalle’ (169). The district’s *real* physiognomy is to be found ‘in den Seitenstraßen’, in ‘den langen, emsigen Häuserschluchten’ (169). Palitzsch’s excursion into the back streets reveals a dense network of stores, and the writer has the sense of having travelled ‘durch ein paar Jahrhunderte’ (169) to arrive here. The residents of the area, he says, exhibit ‘ausschweifenden Geschmack’ and a penchant for ‘ungewöhnliche Formen’ (170). His reaction to and description of a shop window display is somewhat supercilious: ‘Hinter einer Glasscheibe trägt eine gelbsüchtige Puppe einen feschen Sportanzug. Preis 49,50 Mark’ (169). The time warp Palitzsch perceives manifests itself in fashions from a bygone era whose selling point is their English, Parisian and Viennese origin: ‘Die Geographie Europas als Propagandamittel’ (170). Palitzsch relates the panorama of outlandish clothes, shoes, trinkets, ‘Dinge, die wir längst verschollen glaubten’ (170), and associates surface appearances – including outmoded window displays – with the collective character of the people that live there. Restaurants are presented as uniformly ‘griesgrämig, halb wach, verkatert’ (170) during the morning hours, and Palitzsch notes the stench of stale cigarette smoke that lingers over the ‘Papierrosen über den Tischen’ (170). The visitor to eastern Berlin also registers the department store which offers heavily discounted merchandise, which seems to him a reflection of the socio-economic circumstances of the district’s inhabitants. The wares appear tantalisingly cheap and are presented and promoted enticingly. In tones bordering on feigned incredulity he lists the articles available to buy for one *Reichsmark* or less:

einen Wochenendstuhl, einen Eimer Marmelade, eine Kinderhemdhose oder einen Kasten hochfeines Briefpapier. Wer die Wahl hat, hat die Qual. Und schon für miserable 10 Pfennige erhält man in der Abteilung Literatur entweder den Roman “Tropenkoller” oder den zweifellos ebenso schönen Roman “Die Lindenmühle”. Herz, entscheide dich!
(170)

Palitzsch alludes to the fact that even seemingly cheap articles can cost as much as ‘ein halbes Fahrgeld’ (171), a sentiment that demonstrates sensitivity to economic hardship but little in the way of social criticism. Cultural representations of poverty around Alexanderplatz were inclined towards being one-dimensional,

and outsiders frequently aestheticised everyday social hardship. Stenbock-Fermor admits as much in his *feuilleton* when, upon noting the destruction of houses on the periphery of Alexanderplatz in order to accommodate new buildings, he comments: ‘Die alten Häuser im Umkreis, die die Fremden romantisch finden, weil sie in ihnen nicht wohnen müssen, werden abgerissen’.⁷⁶

Alfred Döblin’s experience and descriptions of the living conditions at Alexanderplatz arguably differ to some extent from other, rather more reductive accounts because he witnessed on a daily basis the social reality of the urban poor and working class in his capacity as a doctor living and working in East Berlin.⁷⁷ This is reflected in Döblin’s account of the location, which is unsentimental and does not linger on sites of poverty, but instead records what he sees and moves on relatively swiftly. Döblin (here writing under the pseudonym Linke Poot)⁷⁸ also studies the streets on the margins of Alexanderplatz, including Scheunenviertel, in ‘Östlich um den Alexanderplatz’.⁷⁹ The article was published during Germany’s hyper-inflationary period in 1923, and two months prior to the Scheunenviertel pogrom in November 1923.⁸⁰ Poot embarks upon his walk on a sunny morning, evading Alexanderplatz – which, he says, usually tempts him with its scores of people – in favour of the peripheries east of Alexanderplatz. He describes, among other things, the area’s political landscape: the inhabitants of East Berlin were predominantly proletarian, many of whom were sympathetic or belonged to the Communists’ revolutionary guard during the November revolution of 1918. Poot points out houses that display explicit party-political sympathies: ‘Eine blutrote Plakathand an vielen Häusern: “Du! Bist du schon ein Kämpfer in deiner Sache?”’ (161). Allegiance to the ‘Arbeiterpartei’ (161) is expressed openly; the extent of posters declaring party loyalty on houses are termed ‘ein Barometer für politische

⁷⁶ Stenbock-Fermor, ‘Berlin’, p. 173.

⁷⁷ Döblin lived and worked as a specialist for internal medicine and neuropathy in what was then Frankfurter Allee, in the district of Friedrichshain in East Berlin.

⁷⁸ Döblin published a number of articles under his alias Linke Poot in the literary journal *Neue Rundschau* between 1919 and 1921.

⁷⁹ Linke Poot, ‘Östlich um den Alexanderplatz’, in Jäger and Schütz (eds), *Asphalt*, pp. 161–164. Future references from this source will be indicated by page numbers in round brackets directly after the quotation in the main text.

⁸⁰ The anti-Semitic riots took place over two days during which time Jews were attacked and businesses and houses vandalised by young men. See Matthew Stibbe, *Germany, 1914–1933: Politics, Society and Culture* (Harlow: Pearson, 2010), p. 84, p. 155.

Erregungen' (161). Poot records the appearance of political statements currently on show, a presence indicative of the disenchantment with the contemporary economic climate. The article also charts the effects of the inflationary crisis on individuals and businesses: 'Ich stecke den Kopf in zahlreiche Kneipen: schwacher Besuch. Ein Wirt sagt mir, was ich schon weiß: die hohen Preise, und eine Brauerei hätte schon einen Teil ihrer Pferde verkauft und stelle sich auf Nahrungsmittel um' (161). Many people survived the inflation and lack of affordable goods by selling or trading items on small street-markets. On the 'enge enge' (162) Weberstraße the buildings are described as neglected: 'Viele niedrige Häuser, alle verwahrlost' (162). Poot notes the mortar crumbling from house facades, and how a small army of impoverished women mixes among the groups of traders. Some of the wares in heavy demand bespeak of the times and material state of those persons acquiring them: 'überall besteht Nachfrage nach Säcken, Bindfäden' (162). The desperation and wretchedness of a great many people is not overtly stated but comes to the fore in such observations. Scrap metal merchants are seen among the traders, signalling the economic depression that forced many people to turn their assets into items more useful to them in the short-term. Poot progresses northwest of Alexanderplatz, and the living conditions are depicted as increasingly squalid, inhabited by 'Proletarier and Lumpenproletarier' (162). He glimpses a stamp shop that also attempts to persuade people to part with, and make money from, their belongings. Amidst these decrepit conditions he encounters 'galizische Typen' (163) and his subsequent exploration of the area around Bülowplatz marks Poot's entry into the 'östliches Quartier' (163). Though not explicitly named, his portrayal includes a brief glimpse of Berlin's main Jewish quarter Scheunenviertel and the 'jüdische Fleischereien, Handwerkerstuben, Buchläden' (163) that make up the area. The apparent masses of people come and go 'aus den winkligen, uralten Häusern' (163), and in 'unaufhörlicher Unruhe' (163). Poot emphasises how densely populated the area is, and how he must physically assert himself: 'Ich mache mir Platz' (164). His 'Umzingelung' (161) concludes with reference to daytime cinemas, prostitutes, ever-increasing traffic, and the swarms of people that signal the presence of Alexanderplatz nearby.⁸¹

⁸¹ The protagonist of Döblin's novel *Berlin Alexanderplatz* treads an almost identical path. Franz

While writers usually described freely the social conditions they encountered during their explorations of Alexanderplatz, only few were concerned with a critical interpretation or analysis of the realities. Exceptions are the writings by Joseph Roth, whom Michael Bienert highlights as a writer who immersed himself in the environment of East Berlin and Alexanderplatz without branding it exotic or presenting his examinations as daring forays into “unknown territory”.⁸² Roth spent time researching the causes of poverty and provides in-depth portraits of the area around Alexanderplatz, including Scheunenviertel and its inhabitants:

Er kennt nicht, wie fast alle Einheimischen, Berührungängste gegenüber Angehörigen bestimmter sozialer Gruppen: sie sind ihm alle gleich nah. Er begegnet ihnen mit grenzenloser Aufnahmebereitschaft.⁸³

Descriptions of marginal spaces are an essential part of Roth’s oeuvre, and instead of conveying the sense of ‘shock’ that commonly characterises depictions of Alexanderplatz, Roth’s knowledge of the area enables a differentiated analysis and subsequent portrayal.

The space barely features on Kurt Tucholsky’s map of Berlin, though, significantly, he does take up the concept of East Berlin and its representing foreign territory to West Berliners (possibly including writers such as himself): ‘Was da östlich vom Spittelmarkt liegt, ist dem Westen [...] terra incognita’.⁸⁴ His observation is an inferential scolding of West Berlin for knowing too little about the east of the city. Gabriele Tergit, like Roth, also does not dwell on Alexanderplatz as a far-flung site of mystery, though she acknowledges its neglected milieu. The space plays an important role in her “filmic” narrative of Berlin (see Chapter 4): Tergit repeatedly places Alexanderplatz at the heart of the city in her articles, navigating ‘real’ spaces that make up the area, and it forms part of her personal

Biberkopf visits a daytime cinema in Münzstraße – one of the streets that make up Scheunenviertel –, wanders around Bülowplatz and meets with a prostitute.

⁸² See Joseph Roth’s articles ‘Der Orient in der Hirtenstraße’, in Bienert (ed.) *Joseph Roth in Berlin*, pp. 73–75; ‘Flüchtlinge aus dem Osten’, in Roth, *Werke*, vol. 1, pp. 383–386; ‘Der Tempel Salomonis in Berlin’, in Roth, *Werke*, vol. 1, pp. 381–383; ‘Betrachtung an der Klagemauer’, in Roth, *Werke*, vol. 3, pp. 86–90, and his essay ‘Juden auf Wanderschaft’, in Roth, *Werke*, vol. 2, pp. 827–891.

⁸³ Bienert, *Die eingebildete Metropole*, p. 150.

⁸⁴ Kurt Tucholsky, ‘Die Weiße mit’m Schuss’, in Mary Gerold-Tucholsky and Fritz J. Raddatz (eds), *Kurt Tucholsky. Gesammelte Werke*, vol. 7 (Reinbek bei Hamburg: Rowohlt, 1975), pp. 66–68 (p. 68).

map of Berlin.

2.5 Potsdamer Platz

Potsdamer Platz is a metonymic emblem of Berlin, and a site that is loaded with symbolism in writings from the Weimar era. Literary accounts of the square (though never an actual square, but rather a traffic junction) are notable for being virtually devoid of architectural descriptions; the assembly of buildings that make up the Platz by and large remains de-emphasised. What typically comes to the fore instead are the themes of traffic and tempo, which came to define the space as a vital traffic hub and point of orientation.

Until 1876 Potsdamer Platz lay outside Berlin's city wall. With the onset of the westward expansion of the city, and thanks to Berlin's first train station, the space assumed and developed its central position. The *Großberlin-Gesetz* of 1920 created new commercial centres and, alongside the Kurfürstendamm in the west of the city and the Friedrichstraße closer to the historic centre, Potsdamer Platz developed into a locus of commerce, consumerism, entertainment and café culture. Like Alexanderplatz and much of Berlin's urban surface in general, Potsdamer Platz was characterised by continual change and modification – primarily to accommodate the rise in volume of commuter traffic –, which transformed the square into a symbol of the modern age.⁸⁵ By the mid-1920s, the streets around the square were being used by an incongruous mix of pedestrians, horses and carriages, cars, trams, and buses. The latter mechanised modes of transport were on the rise by then and added to the perception of incessant movement. Potsdamer Platz became a metaphor for the acceleration of urban life.

Erich Kästner's poem 'Besuch vom Lande' (1929) expresses comically the fatal consequences of this modern preoccupation with speed. The account tells of how fictional visitors from the province are intimidated by Berlin. Kästner describes their first – mostly audible – impressions of Potsdamer Platz. Bright lights, noisy trams, trains and cars, prostitutes, and the rapid urban pulse threaten to overwhelm them:

Sie wissen vor Staunen nicht aus und nicht ein.

⁸⁵ See Bienert, *Die eingebildete Metropole*, p. 62.

Sie stehen und wundern sich bloß.
Die Bahnen rasseln. Die Autos schrein [sic].
Sie möchten am liebsten zu Hause sein.
Und finden Berlin zu groß.⁸⁶

The sightseers do not know how to behave in the city, they are unaware of the rules: 'Sie [...] machen alles verkehrt'.⁸⁷ The orthographic similarity of the terms chosen to describe their incorrect conduct – 'verkehrt' – and their eventual fate, that is, they are finally victims of the *Verkehr* at Potsdamer Platz and run over by a car, is perhaps no coincidence. Kästner satirises wide-eyed ingénues in Berlin and their anxieties, but his poem conforms to the commonplace image of Potsdamer Platz in the 1920s. It was representative of the metropolis overall, and the inherent dangers associated with the bewildering and un-navigable city, whose complexities contrast with ordered society *auf dem Lande*. Like the portrayals of Gleisdreieck and Alexanderplatz, the focus is on an individual space that seems capable of rationalising or defining the city in its totality.⁸⁸

Fred Hildenbrandt in 1924 wrote 'Zirkus Potsdamer Platz' for the *Berliner Tageblatt*. The article was published in the same year that Europe's first traffic light was erected at Potsdamer Platz, but predates the installation and conveys what Hildenbrandt views as perhaps the ultimate urban nuisance: traffic navigating the square. He remarks:

Der Platz ist aus den Fugen, und der Verkehr ist aus den Fugen, die Autos taumeln betäubt in die engen Balkengassen, Gäule stieren entsetzt ins Verderben [...], Motorräder schwanken sinnlos vom Fürstenhof zu Josty und von Josty zum Fürstenhof und finden den Ausgang nicht, Radfahrer stoßen wie wahnsinnige Libellen von Tschako zu Tschako [...].⁸⁹

Traffic police attempt to control the wanton movement of transportation to little

⁸⁶ Erich Kästner, 'Besuch vom Lande' in Herbert Günther (ed.), *Hier schreibt Berlin. Eine Anthologie* (Berlin: Fannei & Walz, 1929, repr. 1989), p. 75.

⁸⁷ Kästner, 'Besuch vom Lande', p. 75.

⁸⁸ Anthologies from the 1990s did likewise. The rapid urban restructuring of Berlin after the fall of the Wall and German reunification created a need for distinct impressions of the new German capital. *Feuilleton* writings at the time attempted to capture the developments that transformed the former *Mauerstadt* into the 'new Berlin'. As in the 1920s, *feuilletons* focused on individual sites that were considered representative of the whole city, i.e. Potsdamer Platz or Friedrichstraße.

⁸⁹ Fred Hildenbrandt, 'Zirkus Potsdamer Platz', in Jäger and Schütz (eds), *Asphalt*, pp. 124–125 (p. 124, p. 125).

effect. Hildenbrandt evokes the sense of the threat posed by motorised vehicles (slowly on the rise as a form of transport available to a mass market) on the streets of Berlin generally, and the lack of regulation regarding the 'Berliner Verkehr'. At the time of writing, Potsdamer Platz was evidently regarded as chaotic: five main converging roads; nine intersecting tramlines, and two railway stations (Potsdamer Bahnhof and Anhalter Bahnhof) made the square the busiest *Verkehrsknotenpunkt* in Berlin. Hans Kafka's 'Die Stadt im Sommer. Potsdamer Platz, abends' (*Berliner Tageblatt*, 1928) also gives emphasis to the confusion caused by human and motor traffic at Potsdamer Platz, but presents a rather more disturbing image of the area.⁹⁰ He employs metaphor and imagination in his conceptualisation of the urban experience. As in his portrayal of Gleisdreieck, Kafka thematises modernity and the technological age. Kafka's *feuilleton* opens with the bustle surrounding the nightly commute as thousands of Berliners make their way homeward. The city-dwellers on Kafka's Potsdamer Platz are dehumanised: they have 'keine Gesichter'⁹¹ and their exteriors betray little, if any, individuality. People are absorbed in their own thoughts and the insularity of the commute. Kafka creates the image of unfeeling 'Massenartikel' (127), as cold and anonymous as the machine, and thereby suggests the potential dangers of mass society. Like Kästner's poem, Kafka's account tells of a death caused by a car. A dog is killed at the roadside, the animal's demise symbolic of the threat that technology was regarded as posing, while also illustrating the 'real' hazards of the location's busy roads. The dog's fate notably breaks the flow of man-machines, 'eben noch so stürmisch bewegt, mit einem Male stumm und still' (127). It turns them into speaking, interacting humans, whose private reverie is broken up by an unexpected interruption to what Marc Augé terms 'their own personal itineraries'.⁹²

Kafka's article describes the nighttime activity at Potsdamer Platz, where the café and bar dwellers contribute to its vibrancy.⁹³ The space was understood as

⁹⁰ Hans Kafka, 'Die Stadt im Sommer. Potsdamer Platz, abends', in Jäger and Schütz (eds), *Asphalt*, pp. 126–130.

⁹¹ Kafka, 'Stadt im Sommer', p. 127. Future references from this source will be indicated by page numbers in round brackets directly after the quotation in the main text.

⁹² Augé, *Non-Places*, p. 38.

⁹³ Some of the well-known cafés and restaurants then situated at or near Potsdamer Platz include Café Josty, a popular meeting place for Berlin's artists, authors and intellectuals; Haus Vater-

the pre-eminent representation of the modern age and of a capitalist society, which found physical expression in the wealth of illuminated consumerist imagery inscribed in its architecture. Kafka reports how, as night falls, the space on and around the Potsdamer Platz lights up. He lists the reds, greens and yellows of the illuminations that emanate from a department store, cabaret theatre and shoe factory, the light spectacles expressing the perceived dominance of technology. Kafka mocks the proliferation of consumerist imagery in his account of an acquaintance who desired shoe polish and treatment for sore feet. During successive visits to a café at the Potsdamer Platz he sits and watches the unfolding of 'eine ungeheure Reklame' (128) for both products at the square. Given the apparently enormous dimensions and persuasive power of the adverts, the man is eventually driven to purchase the products whose packaging contained only advertising, not the actual objects being promoted. However, the former was sufficiently lurid and convincing as to suffice in satisfying his urge: 'Das Wunder hätte eben allein die umfangreichen Reklamen bewirkt, das Wunder, daß wieder einmal des Glaubens liebstes Kind gewesen war' (128).

The final section of Kafka's *feuilleton* reveals a preoccupation with the concept of the 'urban jungle', which Potsdamer Platz and, by extension, Berlin represents in the 1920s. Analogous to his article on Gleisdreieck, Kafka considers the interconnectedness of nature and manmade technologies in the physical environment, here alluded to in a series of contrary images – telephone wires and electricity cables interweave with tree roots; asphalt covering surrounds the base of trees, and a bus ticket floating in mid-air is mistaken for a colourful butterfly. Kafka's imagery arguably translates into an unambiguous critique of modernity and specifically the supremacy of machines over nature. In what appears to be a rejection of the modern age, Kafka's article concludes with a utopian vision:

Irgendwann einmal wird diese Stadt zu einer einzigen blühenden und stillen Gartenstadt werden, unter der der Verkehr und alle seine lärmenden Maschinen und alle anderen Maschinen, die dann die Menschheit noch brauchen wird, viele hundert Meter tief in die Erde versenkt ist [...] (129).

land, a commodious establishment that housed several floors of different kinds of amusement; Weinhaus Huth, a luxury restaurant; and the brewery "Meisel-Pschorr".

Kafka's fantasy goes further: he envisions a city, which, in form of a hybrid, exists underground, dominated by machines, and seemingly does away with humans entirely. Nature, meanwhile, takes control of earth's surface, in a reversal of the actual situation in which the natural world invariably acquiesced to the demands of urban development and expansion.⁹⁴

The articles discussed in connection with Potsdamer Platz highlight the engagement by *feuilleton* authors with 1920s Berlin topoi, including transport and traffic circulation, tempo, light and advertising. Such texts collectively promulgate the mythic qualities of Berlin – symbolised by Potsdamer Platz, in addition to Gleisdreieck and Alexanderplatz –, and project an image of the capital as the city of bustling activity and motion. Like Alexanderplatz with the Scheunenviertel, Potsdamer Platz had a few real features that people could relate to (cars, the traffic light). Journalists were able to use these aspects with near-symbolic value in their writings as reflections of the experience of the modern city, essentially conflating the two. The resulting mental map has little or nothing to do with the reality and complexity of Potsdamer Platz.

There were critical voices even at the time that denounced the fixation on Berlin's traffic; that regarded it as somewhat ridiculous and unworthy of the excitement.⁹⁵ Kurt Tucholsky frequently attacked the city's self-stylisation as traffic-riddled, and the celebration of its congested roads, which he attributed to poor urban planning rather than genuine crowds of cars:

Der Verkehr ist in Deutschland zu einer nationalen Zwangsvorstellung geworden. [...]. Krach auf den Straßen, Staub und viele Autos sind die

⁹⁴ Hans Kafka was not alone in his future vision of Potsdamer Platz as overgrown and uninhabited. The art critic and journalist Karl Scheffler, asked in 1920 to write about how he imagined the area would appear in twenty-five years' time, described the following scene: 'Die Häuser werden verwüstet, ihres verwendbaren Materials beraubt, es werden Ruinen sein. Im geborstenen Asphaltpflaster werden Gras und Strauchwerk wuchern. Keine Bahn wird mehr fahren, selten wird ein Wagen zu sehen sein, und wenige Menschen nur werden scheu herumschleichen.' Karl Scheffler, 'Wie sieht der Potsdamer Platz in 25 Jahren aus?', in Jäger and Schütz (eds), *Asphalt*, pp. 119–120 (p. 119, p. 120).

⁹⁵ See also the observations of the French Germanist Pierre Bertaux, who lived in Berlin between 1927 and 1929. In a letter to his parents in 1929 he wrote: 'Wenn ich nur die Straßen entlanggehe, diese Landschaften sehe, die nichts Wirkliches haben – mit der U-Bahn fährt man durch Stadtviertel, in denen es keine Anwohner gibt, nur Schienen, Kanäle, Autofahren – und alles ist leer, es macht nicht mal einen besonders geschäftigen Eindruck.' Pierre Bertaux, 'Wind des Irrsinns' in Zimmermann and Rodeck (eds), *Ach, wie gut schmeckt mir Berlin*, pp. 61–63 (p. 61).

Begleiterscheinung eines Städtebaus, der mit den neuen Formen nicht fertig wird – wie kann man darauf stolz sein?⁹⁶

Tucholsky also satirised traffic calming measures in Berlin, both the human effort by traffic police and automated light signals, which he deemed an exaggeration in a city whose volume of cars was comparatively low to other European cities:

Weißer Handschuhe heben sich, Lampen blinken, Signale blitzen, während gelangweilte Fahrgäste in den Wagen sitzen, und haben wir leuchtende Schildkröten, bitte sehr – und das einzige, das uns noch fehlt, ist der Verkehr.⁹⁷

Walther Kiaulehn, reflecting on 1920s Berlin, recalls that motor vehicles, though sparse in real terms, tended to cause obstruction around Potsdamer Platz. The impression of liveliness was illusory, however, and merely the product of (as Tucholsky noted) inadequacy, as Berlin's map lacked:

[...] zwei wichtige Nordweststraßen, die man zur Entlastung der Leipziger und Potsdamer Straße gebraucht hätte. [...] Weil diese Durchbruchstraßen fehlten, war die Leipziger Straße überbelastet und immer von brodelndem Leben erfüllt, und die langsame Straßenbahn blockierte mit ihren Haltestellen den Autoverkehr. So kam es am Potsdamer Platz zu den ständigen Verkehrszusammenbrüchen.⁹⁸

Berlin's traffic and transport were also a source of bemusement for Joseph Roth whose early writings convey the impression of an old fashioned system bordering on the ludicrous. Roth views the city's trams as the root of all traffic problems, thus justifying the irony with which he views 'die Weltstadt Berlin'.⁹⁹ Trams were, according to Roth, responsible for 'den eigentlichen "Lärm der Großstadt"',¹⁰⁰ and prevented Berlin from having a genuinely 'weltstädtischen Verkehr'.¹⁰¹ Their distinct noise and cumbersome nature signalled a presence felt by Roth to be outmoded 'im Zeitalter des Luftverkehrs',¹⁰² and at odds with the increasing volume of 'Menschenmaterial'¹⁰³ commuting in Berlin.¹⁰⁴

⁹⁶ Kurt Tucholsky, 'Der Verkehr', in Tucholsky, *GW*, vol. 7, pp. 305–308 (p. 305).

⁹⁷ Kurt Tucholsky, 'Berliner Verkehr', in Tucholsky, *GW*, vol. 4, p. 518. See also 'Warten vor dem Nichts', in *GW*, vol. 6, pp. 85–87.

⁹⁸ Kiaulehn, p. 22.

⁹⁹ Joseph Roth, 'Der auferstandene Mensch', in Roth, *Werke*, vol. 1, pp. 936–939 (p. 937).

¹⁰⁰ Joseph Roth, 'Der Elektrizitätsstreik', in Roth, *Werke*, vol. 1, pp. 393–394 (p. 393).

¹⁰¹ Joseph Roth, 'Betrachtung über den Verkehr', in Roth, *Werke*, vol. 2, pp. 276–280 (p. 277).

¹⁰² Roth, 'Betrachtung', p. 277.

¹⁰³ Roth, 'Elektrizitätsstreik', p. 393.

Present examinations of Berlin in the interwar period stress the discrepancies between what Schütz refers to as the ‘media myth-making’¹⁰⁵ that created and promoted the image of a busy modern metropolis on par with London, Paris, or even American cities (such as Chicago and New York), and perceptible truths or realities about Berlin in the 1920s and early 1930s. In *Die eingebildete Metropole*, Michael Bienert examines the origins of what he terms the ‘Weltstadtsehnsucht’¹⁰⁶ of Berlin, and how the much longed-for ‘Weltstädtlichkeit’¹⁰⁷ was pursued by means of promotional campaigns and literary, filmic, and photographic marketing tools, strategies that strove to convey Berlin’s global character. Briesen pursues a parallel line of enquiry in his article ‘Berlin – Die überschätzte Metropole’, and investigates how the stereotype of the world city prevailed even though empirical data suggests that Berlin between the wars was unable to qualify even as a *national* metropolis, not to mention an international one. Though it was the most populated city in the country, other regional cities such as Munich, Cologne, Frankfurt or Hamburg, constituted important ‘Gegengewichte’¹⁰⁸ to Berlin in terms of culture, politics, economics, communications and science. Briesen dispels the myth of Berlin as undisputed *Weltstadt*, and explores whether Berlin in fact remained ‘hauptsächlich eine preußische, nordostdeutsche Hauptstadt’.¹⁰⁹ He intensifies his investigation in ‘Weltmetropole Berlin?’, probing further the well-established conception of Berlin as a national metropolis in the years 1900-1938 that competed on the world stage with Paris and London. Given the short time span during which Berlin was in fact *Reichshauptstadt*, and the country’s precarious political and economic situation between the wars, Briesen concludes that Berlin ‘eine nur unvollständige nationale Metropole werden konnte, die deshalb und wegen der Isolation Deutschlands nach 1914 auch international nicht

¹⁰⁴ See also Vladimir Nabokov’s *Stadtführer Berlin* of 1925, which makes reference to the antiquated nature of the trams: ‘Die Straßenbahn wird in etwa zwanzig Jahre verschwinden, wie die Pferdebahn verschwunden ist. Für mein Gefühl hat sie schon etwas Überlebtes, eine Art altmodischen Charme. Alles an ihr ist ein wenig ungefüge und klapperig [...]’. Vladimir Nabokov, *Stadtführer Berlin. Fünf Erzählungen* (Reinbek bei Hamburg: Rowohlt, 1985), p. 4.

¹⁰⁵ Schütz, ‘Beyond Glittering Reflections of Asphalt’, in Kniesche and Brockmann (eds), *Dancing on the Volcano*, p. 122.

¹⁰⁶ See Bienert, *Die eingebildete Metropole*, pp. 93–136.

¹⁰⁷ Bienert, *Die eingebildete Metropole*, p. 106.

¹⁰⁸ Briesen, ‘Die überschätzte Metropole’, in Brunn and Reulecke (eds), *Metropolis Berlin*, p. 75.

¹⁰⁹ Briesen, ‘Die überschätzte Metropole’, p. 47.

zur erstrangigen Weltstadt aufsteigen konnte'.¹¹⁰

Present-day perceptions of Weimar Berlin are a direct legacy of the 1920s media and its contribution to the topos *Weltstadt Berlin*. Parallel to the manner in which the Weimar press shaped perceptions of Berlin at the time – and influenced the mental map that inhabitants carried with them of places in Berlin – anthologies of Weimar *feuilleton* writings in turn help current readers' understanding of the era. However, a distinction must be drawn between the 'feuilletonistische Topographie'¹¹¹ of Berlin that emerges from singling out contributions in anthologies, and the urban tableaux and cartography created by authors' entire oeuvres. Read in sequence, collected articles reveal a considerably different version of Berlin. As stated previously, Joseph Roth's view of technology cannot be assessed conclusively on the basis of one *feuilleton*. The space of Gleisdreieck loses some of the significance attached to it as a constituent part of Roth's perception of the city when read out of the context of both the technology discourse at the time and his wider body of work. As will be demonstrated in the following chapter, Roth's oeuvre yields many more examples of his overriding concern with depicting social topographies that attest to the poverty and suffering wrought by the war and inflation. Popular sites such as the Gleisdreieck are in fact of secondary importance in the topographical hierarchy that can be seen to exist in Roth's work. In a similar manner, Kurt Tucholsky's satirical characterisation of Berlin and Berliners does more than simply amuse; read within the framework of his entire works, it adds up to more severe criticism directed at both the city and post-war Germany, and has greater repercussions for the mapping of Berlin. Gabriele Tergit's omission of stock locations indicates her principal interest in 'real' Berlin, which presents us with a more local, and thus personal, cartography of the city.

¹¹⁰ Detlef Briesen, 'Weltmetropole Berlin? Versuch, sich einem deutschen Mythos über die Zeit zwischen den Weltkriegen empirisch zu nähern', in Brunn and Reulecke (eds), *Metropolis Berlin*, pp. 151–186 (p. 185).

¹¹¹ Jäger and Schütz, 'Nachwort', in *Asphalt*, p. 342.

CHAPTER THREE

SPACES OF DIVISION, DIFFERENCE, AND POLITICS: THE GEOGRAPHY OF JOSEPH ROTH'S BERLIN

This chapter explores the *feuilleton* publications of the Austrian author and journalist Joseph Roth who established himself as one of the most accomplished *feuilleton* writers of the interwar period in Germany. From 1923 he also began to publish novels,¹ and won acclaim in the early 1930s with the novels *Hiob* (1930) and *Radetzkymarsch* (1932).

Roth was above all a social observer whose *feuilleton* articles capture the atmosphere of the post-war world. In this chapter I examine how Roth's perceptions of Berlin are articulated through space. Specifically, I outline how his concerns, and the antipathy he felt towards the capital's political climate and drive towards modernity between the wars, translate into a particular cartography of Berlin. Most noticeable is the topographical hierarchy that can be seen to exist in Roth's Berlin texts: the urban map that emerges is of a city that comprises emphatically impoverished and, to a lesser extent, political spaces.

3.1 Introduction

Joseph Roth moved from Vienna to Berlin in 1920 in search of better financial opportunities. Born to Jewish parents in 1894 in Brody, what was then Galicia – part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire – Roth began his career as a journalist for the left-of-centre Viennese daily newspaper *Der Neue Tag* in April 1919. The folding of the paper in 1920 as a consequence of Vienna's continuous economic and cultural decline after the end of the First World War led Roth, like many other Austrian authors and artists in the 1920s, to seek employment in the German capital.² Though Berlin shared the trauma of the war (and was similarly afflicted by unemployment and rising inflation), it had the benefit of

¹ Roth's first novel *Das Spinnennetz* and was issued serially in the Viennese *Arbeiterzeitung* between October and November 1923.

² The move by the intelligentsia from Vienna to Berlin was a typical trend in the 1920s. Among the Austrian authors and journalists who left Vienna for the German capital were Alfred Polgar, Arnolt Bronnen, Anton Kuh and Robert Musil. For further detail, see Friedbert Aspetsberger, 'Wien-Berlin: Ein literarisch-politischer Querschnitt personaler Beziehungen 1910-1955', in Warren and Zitzlsperger (eds), *Vienna meets Berlin*, pp. 257–269.

being 'eher bereit freilich zu neuen Gedanken und Experimenten als die österreichische Metropole'.³ The German capital represented modernity and dynamism after the war: labels likely to have appealed to Roth's journalistic instincts, with the city a potential 'Karrieresprungbrett'.⁴

By the time Roth began to write about, and convey a sense of, life in Berlin for numerous influential metropolitan newspapers (he began publishing *feuilletons* in the *Neue Berliner Zeitung* in 1920, and in the *Berliner Börsen-Courier* from early 1921), he had already produced a substantial number of articles detailing the post-war world in Vienna. A brief evaluation of Roth's Viennese writings, read in relation to his Berlin *feuilletons*, reveals similarities in his urban observations. Particularly the impact of the First World War on ordinary people – those, mostly men, whose lives had been irrevocably altered – was a dominant trope. Roth's focus was on portraying the fate of the 'lost generation':⁵ former soldiers and casualties of war who returned to a society radically altered and seemingly incapable of re-integrating them. The psychological and physical damage caused by the conflict, coupled with the subsequent political and social changes, were subjects Roth continued to explore from early on in his stay in Berlin. The presence of the homeless, the poor and the war-wounded in Berlin was visible proof of the city's struggle to cope with problems such as housing shortages, poverty, unemployment, and the provision of care for former soldiers. Roth linked the neglect of certain sections of society to the incompetence of governmental decision makers, and was a prescient observer of political developments in the Republic. He was quick to note the change of mood taking hold in German society, especially after 1925 when the former Prussian-German field marshal Paul von Hindenburg was elected as *Reichspräsident*. To Roth, this political act seemed to confirm the anti-republican tendencies that were on the rise, and that year he left Germany to work in Paris, never again to return to Berlin on a full-time

³ Westermann, *Joseph Roth*, p. 30.

⁴ Wilhelm von Sternburg, *Joseph Roth. Eine Biographie* (Cologne: Kiepenheuer & Witsch, 2009), p. 243.

⁵ The writer and poet Gertrude Stein used the term to describe the poets, artists and writers (F. Scott Fitzgerald, T.S. Eliot, Ernest Hemingway) who had escaped to France after the First World War. These were young men who came of age in the post-war period and lacked direction. Ernest Hemingway tells of how Stein came to use the expression in his memoirs, *A Moveable Feast*, published in 1964. See Hemingway, *A Moveable Feast* (London: Cape, 1964, repr. New York: Scribner, 2009), p. 61.

basis.⁶ Like Kurt Tucholsky, who relocated to Paris in 1924 and also felt France to be a place of safety, Roth recorded the continuing existence of militarism and nationalism in Germany in the period between the wars. Both writers describe archetypes that stood for whole portions of German society, and that exemplified trends and the moral tone of the times.

The Berlin that emerges from Roth's texts is rarely a product of straightforward depiction. In 1924, Roth articulated the shortcomings of purely descriptive accounts of cities:

Es ist ein große Vermessenheit, Städte beschreiben zu wollen. [...] Ich könnte Häuser beschreiben, Straßenzüge, Plätze, Kirchen, Fassaden, Portale, Parkanlagen, Familien, Baustile, Einwohnergruppen, Behörden und Denkmäler. Das ergäbe ebensowenig das Wesen einer Stadt, wie die Angabe einer bestimmten Anzahl von Celsiusgraden die Temperatur eines Landstriches vorstellbar macht.⁷

These thoughts set the tone for Roth's approach to the evocation of cities in general, which tends to be interpretive rather than made up of surface portraits. In 1925, he began a series of articles about his journeys in the south of France with a remark about his own inability to describe and *report*, and instead placed emphasis on narrating the subjective experience: 'Ich kann nur erzählen, was in mir vorging und wie ich es erlebte'.⁸

Roth's Berlin *feuilletons*, conforming to this pattern of personal interpretation, present a record of the city that endeavours to penetrate 'durch das Propagierete und Intentionale hindurch zum "Eigentlichen" der Stadt'.⁹ Roth's interest was in the 'real' city, and the process of exposing and conveying the reality of modern urban life in Berlin was dependent on Roth's skilled manner of observation. His analyses of the post-war city were often diagnostic, based on close examination of people and places. Roth placed himself within the action. While such contemporaries as Franz Hessel and Walter Benjamin produced vivid 'readings' of Berlin in their role as *flâneurs*, Roth's approach to the city was arguably not that of the aimless stroller. He did not belong to the

⁶ Joseph Roth emigrated in January 1933 after the appointment of Hitler as *Reichskanzler*. Thereafter he led a nomadic existence, moving between France, Poland, and Austria. He died in Paris in 1939 as a result of chronic alcoholism.

⁷ Joseph Roth, 'Lemberg, die Stadt', in Roth, *Werke*, vol. 2, pp. 285–289 (p. 285).

⁸ Joseph Roth, 'Die weißen Städte', in Roth, *Werke*, vol. 2, pp. 451–506 (p. 453).

⁹ Prümm, 'Die Stadt der Reporter und Kinogänger', in Scherpe (ed.), *Die Unwirklichkeit der*

class of literary amblers who, as Anke Gleber terms it, 'enter the public sphere in order to "read" the texts of modernity within the continuum of their strolls'.¹⁰ Though intuitively sensitive to the social and political issues of the day, Roth avoided intellectualising his understanding of Berlin during the 1920s. However, even though Roth was, in the words of Klaus Westermann, 'Feind jeglicher Theorie',¹¹ he nevertheless developed 'aus der konkreten Beobachtung [...] sehr stringent theoretische Verallgemeinerungen'.¹² So, while Roth's texts arguably stand in paradigmatic relation to one another, he did not draw attention to the interrelation of his articles, other than to return to earlier texts by way of reference. Westermann terms Roth 'der Journalist mit den wechselnden Meinungen',¹³ who allowed himself the freedom to contradict himself and not commit in the long term to any one viewpoint or philosophy. His reluctance to oblige the expectations of a particular readership is mirrored in his refusal to write for just one paper.¹⁴

Despite his journalistic success in Berlin, Roth never grew fond of the city. He expressed openly his aversion to many of the traits that characterised Germany and the German people after the war,¹⁵ and would always prefer Parisian *joie de vivre* to the 'Sachlichkeit'¹⁶ of Berlin. Nevertheless, the city forms the focus of many of his articles.¹⁷ Indeed, Michael Bienert notes that, of the thirteen hundred articles written during the interwar period, Berlin forms 'einen topographischen und thematischen Schwerpunkt. Keinen anderen Ort

Städte, p. 82.

¹⁰ Gleber, p. 4.

¹¹ Westermann, *Joseph Roth*, p. 28.

¹² Prümm, p. 84.

¹³ Westermann, p. 28.

¹⁴ An examination of the newspapers that published Roth's articles – and indeed a number of his novels, in serialised form – reveals how his allegiance had little to do with his political disposition but was instead guided by pragmatism (the need to make a living) and in no small part by vanity. On this point Karl Prümm writes: 'Von Anfang an war es sein Ziel, eine Autorenschaft herauszubilden, die sich eine Souveränität gegenüber Orten und Ereignissen bewahrte und das Medium, die Zeitung, diesem Ziel instrumentell unterordnete. Roths Schreiben war von Anbeginn egozentrisch'. See Prümm, 'Die Stadt der Reporter und Kinogänger', p. 83.

¹⁵ See Jon Hughes, 'Joseph Roth in France: Re-assessing "Die weißen Städte"', *Austrian Studies*, 13 (2005), 126–141 (126).

¹⁶ Joseph Roth, 'Der Gast aus dem Norden', in Roth, *Werke*, vol. 2, pp. 52–54 (p. 52).

¹⁷ Joseph Roth lived in Berlin between 1920 and 1925. He was subsequently dispatched to Paris as the foreign correspondent for the *Frankfurter Zeitung*. In the following years Roth travelled and reported continuously. His itinerary included France, a five-month journey through Russia, tours in Albania, Poland, and Italy. In 1933 Roth left Germany for good and escaped to Paris. It was in exile that Roth produced more than half of his literary oeuvre, contributing to various newspapers, and working on his novels.

hat Roth vergleichbar umfassend beschrieben'.¹⁸ Despite the animosity he harboured towards Berlin, then, Roth was drawn to the 'unknown territory behind the surface appearances of the city',¹⁹ far removed from the capital's famed café culture, nightlife, and entertainment industry. Indeed, Roth's articles display a pronounced empathy for 'everyday' Berliners, those from working-class backgrounds heading to factories or seeking work, and poor and marginalised persons: demographic groups that are relatively underrepresented in customary accounts of Weimar Germany.²⁰

3.2 Roth Scholarship

Individual research projects have thus far tended to neglect Roth's journalism, and discussion of spatial articulation in his *feuilletons* remains particularly underrepresented in scholarship.²¹ Studies published after the Second World War concentrated for the most part on his novels, which received critical attention owing in part to the interest generated by so-called *Exil-Literatur* and West German film adaptations of a number of Roth's novels produced in the 1960s and '70s, including *Radetzkymarsch*, *Flucht ohne Ende*, and *Die Rebellion*.²² The only scholars who made Roth's *feuilletons* the exclusive focus of their studies prior to the 1990s were Ilse Plank in 1967 and Ingeborg

¹⁸ Bienert, *Joseph Roth in Berlin*, p. 13.

¹⁹ Midgley, p. 272.

²⁰ Historian Matthew Stibbe describes how 'the poor have often been ignored in historiography, the lower middle classes (or *Mittelstand*) and upper middle classes [...] are of principal interest to historians of modern Germany [...]'. See Stibbe, p. 112.

²¹ The only recent studies that read Roth's work within an explicitly spatial context are articles (in edited volumes) by Ulrike Zitzlsperger and Jürgen Heizmann. The former's article examines the ubiquity and symbolism of semi-public spaces in Roth's novels and *feuilletons*. Noting that hotels, stations and cafés were representative spaces in literary writing of the interwar period, the article emphasises Roth's tendency to use specific semi-public realms as a means of mapping the times. See Ulrike Zitzlsperger, 'Caféhäuser, Bahnhöfe und Hotels: Zur Bedeutung der halböffentlichen Räume im Werk Joseph Roths', in Johann Georg Lughofer and Mira Miladinović Zalaznik (eds), *Joseph Roth. Europäisch-Jüdischer Schriftsteller und Österreichischer Universalist* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2011), pp. 55–67. Heizmann's article examines Roth's reports from industrial districts, including the *Ruhrgebiet*, in terms of their topological depiction against the backdrop of technological, industrial modernity. See Heizmann, 'Symbolik und Raum in Joseph Roths Industriereportagen', in Eicher (ed), *Joseph Roth und die Reportage*, pp. 151–168.

²² See, for example, Fritz Hackert, *Kulturpessimismus und Erzählform. Studien zu Joseph Roths Leben und Werk* (Bern: Lang, 1967); Hansjürgen Böning, *Joseph Roths Radetzkymarsch. Thematik, Struktur, Sprache* (Munich: Fink, 1968); Helmut Famiara-Parcsetich, *Die Erzählsituation in den Romanen Joseph Roths* (Bern: Lang, 1971); Maud Curling, *Joseph Roths Radetzkymarsch. Eine Psycho-Soziologische Interpretation* (Frankfurt a. M.: Lang, 1981); Werner Sieg, *Zwischen Anarchismus und Fiktion: Eine Untersuchung*

Sültemeyer in 1976.²³ Indeed, it was not until the publication between 1989 and 1991 of the third *Werkausgabe* – a complete collection of Roth’s prose as well as his journalistic work – that Roth’s *feuilletons* became widely accessible for the first time.²⁴ Since then, Roth’s life and work have attracted considerable attention: numerous biographies piece together details about his life²⁵ and journalistic career,²⁶ while Roth’s correspondence,²⁷ and *feuilletons* and essays continue to be collected in anthology form.²⁸ Themes investigated include the role of political beliefs in Roth’s writings,²⁹ his time in, and depictions of, Paris,³⁰ Roth’s court writings,³¹ and the topics of identity,³² Judaism and religion in his oeuvre.³³ Helen Chambers has investigated Roth’s Weimar journalism and how his thematic concerns illuminate the condition of post-war Germany.³⁴

zum Werk von Joseph Roth (Bonn: Bouvier, 1974).

²³ See Ilse Plank, *Joseph Roth als Feuilletonist. Eine Untersuchung von Themen, Stil und Aufbau seiner Feuilletons*, Dissertation (Erlangen, 1967); Ingeborg Sültemeyer, *Das Frühwerk Joseph Roths 1915-1926* (Vienna: Herder & Co., 1976).

²⁴ Klaus Westermann (ed.), *Joseph Roth. Werke*, 6 vols (Cologne: Kiepenheuer & Witsch, 1989-1991).

²⁵ David Bronsen, *Joseph Roth. Eine Biographie* (Cologne: Kiepenheuer & Witsch, 1974); Daniel Keel and Daniel Kampa (eds), *Joseph Roth. Leben und Werk* (Zurich: Diogenes, 2010).

²⁶ Westermann, *Joseph Roth, Journalist*; Almut Todorow, ‘Brechungen: Joseph Roth und das Feuilleton der Frankfurter Zeitung’, in Michael Kessler and Fritz Hackert (eds), *Joseph Roth: Interpretation - Kritik - Rezeption: Akten des internationalen, interdisziplinären Symposiums 1989, Akademie der Diözese Rottenburg-Stuttgart* (Tübingen: Stauffenburg, 1990), pp. 373–384.

²⁷ See Madeleine Rietra and Rainer-Joachim Siegel (eds), *“Jede Freundschaft mit mir ist verderblich”. Joseph Roth und Stefan Zweig. Briefwechsel 1927-1938* (Göttingen: Wallstein, 2011), and Michael Hofmann (ed.), *Joseph Roth: A Life in Letters* (New York: W. W. Norton & Co., 2012).

²⁸ See Helmut Nürnberger (ed.), *Joseph Roth. “Ich zeichne das Gesicht der Zeit”. Essays, Reportagen, Feuilletons* (Göttingen: Wallstein, 2010).

²⁹ See, for example, Uwe Schweikert, ‘Der rote Joseph. Politik und Feuilleton beim frühen Joseph Roth (1919-1926)’, in *Joseph Roth. Text + Kritik. Sonderband Joseph Roth*, ed. by H. L. Arnold (Munich: Richard Boorberg Verlag, 1974), pp. 40–55; Ingeborg Sültemeyer, *Das Frühwerk Joseph Roths 1915-1926* (Vienna: Herder & Co., 1976); Westermann, *Joseph Roth, Journalist*.

³⁰ Gerhard R. Kaiser (ed.), *Paris? Paris! Bilder der französischen Metropole in der nicht-fiktionalen deutschsprachigen Prosa zwischen Hermann Bahr und Joseph Roth* (Heidelberg: Winter, 2002); Dieter Mayer, *Kurt Tucholsky. Joseph Roth. Walter Mehring. Beiträge zu Politik und Kultur zwischen den Weltkriegen* (Frankfurt a. M.: Lang, 2010).

³¹ See Helen Chambers, “‘Eine ganze Welt baut sich im Gerichtssaal auf’: Law and Order in the Reportage of Joseph Roth and Gabriele Tergit”, in Warren and Zitzlsperger (eds), *Vienna meets Berlin*, p. 96; Fritz Hackert, “‘Der fleißige Chroniker kriminalistischer Ereignisse’. Die Gerichtsreportagen Joseph Roths”, in Eicher (ed.), *Joseph Roth und die Reportage*, pp. 69–80.

³² Telse Hartmann, *Kultur und Identität. Szenarien der Deplatierung im Werk Joseph Roths* (Tübingen: Francke, 2006); Jon Hughes, *Facing modernity: Fragmentation, Culture, and Identity in Joseph Roth’s Writing in the 1920s* (London: Maney, 2006).

³³ Frank Joachim Eggers, *“Ich bin ein Katholik mit jüdischem Gehirn”. Modernitätskritik und Religion bei Joseph Roth und Franz Werfel. Untersuchungen zu den Erzählerischen Werken* (Frankfurt a. M.: Lang, 1996); Eva Raffel, *Vertraute Fremde. Das östliche Judentum*

Meanwhile, there exists a small number of projects that have made Roth's Berlin writings their main focal point. These include individual articles (some of which have been noted above), but also larger undertakings, such as Irmgard Wirtz' examination of the *feuilleton* as a genre, Roth's use of language, and recurring archetypes in his articles,³⁵ and Michael Bienert's *Joseph Roth in Berlin*. Written as a quasi-guide to 1920s Berlin for modern-day *flâneurs*, Bienert's work focuses on geographical features in Roth's *feuilletons*. Joseph Roth's time in the capital is also the object of study in Hui-Fang Chiao's dissertation "*Eine junge, unglückliche und zukünftige Stadt*". *Das Berlin der zwanziger Jahre in Joseph Roths Werk*.³⁶ Chiao explores Roth's perceptions of Berlin during his time spent there and though it offers valuable insight into Roth's *Großstadtswahrnehmung*, its focus is predominantly on his prose rather than his journalism, and Chiao examines locations, not more specific spatial depictions.

It is evident that, other than their inclusion in more general bodies of work, studies of Roth's *feuilletons* have yet to explore fully numerous lines of enquiry. In what follows, I will draw on current theories of space to explore how Roth's perceptions of Berlin after the war are configured in spatial terms: Roth uses particular spaces in the city to convey socio-political transformations that symbolise the post-conflict world. The focus on the spatiality of Roth's *feuilletons* is a new mode of investigation that reveals his programmatic approach to the depiction of Berlin. This chapter's key concern is the topographical division in evidence in Roth's writing. He directs his attention at particular districts to render the world of the proletariat, the city's homeless inhabitants, Jewish refugees, as well as the bourgeoisie. 'Real' sites of poverty, and political spaces (both overtly and implicitly political) are foregrounded and

im Werk von Joseph Roth und Arnold Zweig (Tübingen: Narr, 2002).

³⁴ Chambers, 'Signs of the Times: Joseph Roth's Weimar Journalism', in Karl Leydecker (ed.), *German Novelists of the Weimar Republic: Intersections of Literature and Politics* (New York: Camden House, 2006), pp. 101–124. See also: Helen Chambers, "Die Toten ohne Namen". Gewaltsamer Tod in der Großstadt in Reportagen von Joseph Roth, Theodor Fontane und Egon Erwin Kisch', in *Joseph Roth und die Reportage*, pp. 81–97; and Helen Chambers, 'Sex und die Behörde in Joseph Roths Reportage der zwanziger Jahre', in Lughofer and Zalaznik (eds), *Joseph Roth. Europäisch-Jüdischer Schriftsteller* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2011), pp. 169–180.

³⁵ Irmgard Wirtz, *Joseph Roths Fiktionen des Faktischen. Das Feuilleton der Zwanziger Jahre und „Die Geschichte von der 1002. Nacht“ im historischen Kontext* (Berlin: Schmidt, 1997).

³⁶ Hui-Fang Chiao, "*Eine junge, unglückliche und zukünftige Stadt*." *Das Berlin der zwanziger Jahre in Joseph Roths Werk* (Berlin: Küster, 1994).

scrutinised, and one can observe how social and political aspects are linked with geographical locations. The chapter is organised in three sections, each of which examines central themes that dominate Roth's Berlin articles: 'Spaces of Social Division' explores how Roth divides the city according to economic categories; 'Spaces of Difference' takes up the issue of how he maps homelessness, death and Jewish space in Berlin; and 'Spaces of Politics' addresses how politics is identified and located in the city.

3.3 Spaces of Social Division

In Erich Kästner's novel *Fabian* (set in Berlin in the early 1930s), the author makes reference to Berlin's 'Topographie der Unmoral'.³⁷ The eponymous Fabian splits Berlin along the points of the compass, ascribing specific traits to different districts in the city: 'Im Osten residiert das Verbrechen, im Zentrum die Gaunerei, im Norden das Elend, im Westen die Unzucht'.³⁸ This reductionist view of Berlin, exaggerated for satirical effect and a popular one among writers at the time, bears similarity to portrayals of social milieus in Joseph Roth's Berlin journalism. His journalistic oeuvre yields numerous descriptions of the crass discrepancies that exist between societal groups in Weimar Berlin. These contrasts are transmitted in a plurality of ways, more often than not by the deliberate juxtaposition of the kinds of lives being led by Berlin's lower classes – 'die Unteren'³⁹ – and the city's upper middle classes. The dominant paradigm is above all the socio-economically dictated geographical partitioning of the city into poor (northern and eastern) and wealthy (western) topographies.

Roth employs simple imagery to highlight key class differences between Berlin's districts and their inhabitants. For example, in 'Schatzgräber in der Allee' (1922), an account of how a large mound of waste in Frankfurter Allee in the east of Berlin becomes a place of pilgrimage for the poor, Roth calls attention to the way in which, here, dusk approaches 'rascher [...] als zum Beispiel am Kurfürstendamm'.⁴⁰ The fewer hours of sunshine bestowed upon Frankfurter Allee appear symbolic of the material gulf that exists between the

³⁷ Kästner, *Fabian. Die Geschichte eines Moralisten* (Munich: Deutscher Taschenbuch Verlag, 1931, repr. 2007), p. 97.

³⁸ Kästner, p. 99.

³⁹ Joseph Roth, 'Die Toten ohne Namen', in Roth, *Werke*, vol. 1, pp. 914–916 (p. 915).

areas. He has recourse to the same metaphor in 'Mit 900 Kindern im Kino' from 1924, which relates how a large group of children from poor backgrounds is treated by a charitable institution to a viewing at the UfA-cinema in Charlottenburg, West Berlin. Roth remarks how, after the screening, the children will return home to North and East Berlin, 'wo es nicht so frei und reich aussieht wie in der Tauentzienstraße, in der die erste Vorfrühlingssonne später unterzugehen scheint als in der Frankfurter Allee'.⁴¹ Roth argues that such contrasts are not a contrivance created for dramatic effect, but exist naturally: 'So brutale, kitschige, unkünstlerische Kontraste mache nicht ich, sondern das Leben'.⁴² Despite his protestation, however, Roth's approach is a means of underscoring class division, and a literary device used in a series of *feuilleton* articles that displays a sociological dimension and links certain types of human behaviour to particular spaces in Berlin.⁴³ 'Das Varieté der Besitzlosen' from 1923 is representative of this type of social observation. The article offers a sociological snapshot of different classes by comparing simultaneous weekend celebrations by the proletariat and those of West Berliners. The act of drawing distinctions signals the economic and spatial segregation between the underprivileged and the more fortunate sectors of society.

The article's point of departure is a precise description of a geographical location and its surrounding milieu:

Die Annenstraße ist lang und grausam gleichförmig wie eine schlaflose Nacht. Die Häuser stehen da wie herbefohlen, so herzlos und zweckmäßig, als wohne man nicht in ihnen, sondern wäre nur einquartiert. Das ist das Viertel der Besitzlosen und der Fronenden. Derer, die von der Schwielenhand in den Mund leben. Am Wochentagsmorgen [*sic*] schüttet dieser Stadtteil Tausende, Tausende in den Betrieb der Welt.⁴⁴

Roth maps a space by way of temporal analogies: the street is likened to a sleepless night; the houses have the appearance of temporary lodgings,⁴⁵ not permanent homes, and on weekday mornings the inhabitants are 'poured' out

⁴⁰ Joseph Roth, 'Schatzgräber in der Allee', in Roth, *Werke*, vol. 1, pp. 750–752 (p. 750).

⁴¹ Joseph Roth, 'Mit 900 Kindern im Kino', in Roth, *Werke*, vol. 2, pp. 78–79 (p. 79).

⁴² Joseph Roth, 'Berliner Bilderbuch', in Roth, *Werke*, vol. 2, pp. 92–129 (p. 102).

⁴³ For details on Roth's literary techniques and form, see Ilse Plank, *Joseph Roth als Feuilletonist. Eine Untersuchung von Themen, Stil und Aufbau seiner Feuilletons*, Dissertation (Erlangen, 1967).

⁴⁴ Joseph Roth, 'Das Varieté der Besitzlosen', in Roth, *Werke*, vol. 1, pp. 1004–1006 (p. 1004).

⁴⁵ The term 'einquartieren' usually alludes to soldiers being temporarily placed in family or other

with regularity by the area itself in order to service the city. The connection is made between the lower sections of society and the production process, an implicit criticism directed at the privileged upper classes whose leisure activities did not, in the words of Bettina Matthias, 'contribute to the sustenance of life or social progress'.⁴⁶ Roth alters the idiom 'von der Hand in den Mund leben' to 'von der Schwielenhand in den Mund', suggesting his empathy lies with the ordinary Berliners.

What follows in the article is a series of descriptions of Sunday leisure activities of the working class, interlaced with contrasting images of how middle-class Berlin amuses itself, ranging from the food consumed to the *manner* in which pleasure is experienced. The less well-off residents of East Berlin, for example, 'wollen sich freuen. Sie wollen sich nur freuen. In den Vergnügungsstätten des Westens amüsiert man sich dagegen'.⁴⁷ Even the lighting effects created by the individual venues are subject to evaluation, and Roth describes approvingly the simplicity of the proletarian solution to creating atmosphere, as opposed to more technologically advanced methods adopted in the west of Berlin:

Die Bogenlampe in der Mitte der Bühne ist mit violetter und rosa Papier bekleidet. So einfach ist das Problem des Stimmungsmachens hier gelöst! Im Westen läßt man violette Stimmung aus hintergründlichen Scheinwerfern über Kahlköpfe zischen.⁴⁸

Roth produces a socio-spatial portrait: class difference is expressed in spatial terms, with eastern and western districts in Berlin doing things very differently.

In his texts, Roth does not attempt to conceal his disdain for the bourgeoisie and members of the upper classes in the west of the city. Indeed, his descriptions of West Berlin and its affluent inhabitants are frequently akin to caricature and parody. Portrayals of the *Bürgertum* and leisured classes on the whole serve as a negative barometer against which Roth measures, and renders, the city's disadvantaged masses.⁴⁹ This can be seen, for example, in

homes, it thus reinforces the sense of the houses being impermanent.

⁴⁶ Bettina Matthias, *The Hotel as Setting in the Early 20th-Century German and Austrian Literature: Checking in to Tell a Story* (New York: Camden House, 2006), p. 31.

⁴⁷ Roth, 'Das Varieté', p. 1005.

⁴⁸ Roth, 'Das Varieté', p. 1005.

⁴⁹ See in this context also the critique levelled by Roth at so-called 'Weddinglieder', particular songs that were popular among the revues and cabarets in West Berlin. According to Roth's

his article 'Sorgen des Kurfürstendamms' from 1923, a sarcastic sketch on, and critique aimed at, the upper middle classes and the kind of dilemmas they 'suffer'. The prosperous boulevard Kurfürstendamm here features as a symbol of bourgeois privilege and excess. Termed a metaphorical 'Verkehrsader'⁵⁰ by Roth, it was considered the apotheosis of amusement and entertainment, and one of the most popular destinations in Berlin for those distraction. Moreover, the Kurfürstendamm was the living space of the wealthy, remote from the unstable milieu of Berlin's working class districts.

In Roth's article, an assembly of 'Gattinnen mit Perlenbesatz; Schwiegertöchter in mittlerem Alter [...]; Männer mit Haarausfall infolge Dividendenstudiums; angehende Schwiegersöhne'⁵¹ are gathered in an ornately furnished pâtisserie on the Kurfürstendamm. Their conversation, overheard and retold with relish by Roth, includes a worried exchange about their respective children's nutrition:

Da ist zum Beispiel der kleine Dagobert, zu Hause gelassener Spross [...]. Dieser Dagobert – höre ich –, zu Hause "Dago" gerufen, ißt partout keine Hülsenfrüchte. Er hat was gegen Hülsenfrüchte, der kleine Dago.⁵²

Another mother tells of her trick of smuggling eggs into her daughter's diet. Roth's cynicism towards upper-class behaviour is palpable in both the banality of the matter discussed – the refusal by a child to eat pulses; diets generally – and the repetition of the boy's abbreviated name. Meanwhile, one couple, fresh from the theatre and in evening dress, joins the round and expresses the desire to escape from what they perceive of as the drudgery of the city to a health

definition, the category 'Weddinglieder' essentially denotes the theatricalisation of the plight suffered by residents in Wedding, a working class district of Berlin characterised by crime and prostitution. Cabaret, he says, romanticises the anguish and social hardship for the sake of entertainment, turning Wedding into a poster child for suffering. Roth responded to this form of entertainment in his text 'Literarischer Wedding', which attacks the propensity by West Berliners to make a mockery of reality. Here he defends Wedding against western 'tourists' in suffering – he terms the artificial representation of the area 'Ansichtskarten-wedding' –, whose pretence devalues real hardship, and simply creates a false sense of empathy. Instead, Roth condemns the didactic, moralising function he perceives 'Weddingliteratur' to possess: 'Sie will dem Bürger vom Kurfürstendamm zeigen, was das heißt: eingesperrt sein, Dirne, Verbrecher.' The lessons in distress, however, fail to induce 'eine einzige Bürgerträne', but instead causes merriment, the middle classes reassured in their social superiority bordering on contempt for the lower rungs of society. See 'Literarischer Wedding', in Roth, *Werke*, vol. 1, pp. 499–502 (p. 499, p. 501, p. 500).

⁵⁰ Joseph Roth, 'Der Kurfürstendamm', in Roth, *Werke*, vol. 3, pp. 98–100 (p. 99).

⁵¹ Joseph Roth, 'Sorgen des Kurfürstendamms', in Roth, *Werke*, vol. 1, pp. 990–993 (p. 991).

⁵² Roth, 'Sorgen', p. 991.

resort. They express the intention of storing their silverware with relatives during their absence. Written at the height of the inflation enveloping Germany in 1923,⁵³ this parody of the snobbery of the chattering classes and their ostentatious display of wealth serves to accentuate the destitution experienced elsewhere in Berlin, as Roth speculates at the end of his text 'wie viele Menschen in dieser Nacht aus dem Leben geflüchtet sind'⁵⁴ instead of fleeing to a health resort.

Aside from addressing the issue of inequality, Roth's journalism shows scant interest in, and eschews, topographical or sociological depictions of bourgeois milieus. He provides the upper classes with dialogue (which he relays with sarcasm), but descriptions are reserved for those who are deprived. Indeed, Roth gives preference to, and maps in greater and more reflective detail, the particular qualities of north-eastern parts of Berlin and their populace – to him the more authentic 'face' of Berlin after the war. Roth's articles on the *Rummelplatz*, which he detailed on several occasions, are significant here because they depict explicitly a geographic feature designated purely for the pursuit of pleasure by working class Berliners. These temporary fairgrounds offered all manner of amusements, from mirror labyrinths to hoop-la stalls and rides, and sated the acute appetite of 'freudehungrige Großstadtmenschen'⁵⁵ for fun and distraction. The *Rummelplätze* were usually improvised venues, marginalised on the fringes of the city, and stood in contrast to the surrounding factories and tenement blocks.⁵⁶ Roth's *feuilletons* illustrate the origins of the sites, and the common need for such forms of amusement for the populace at the lower end of the social scale: 'Seine Heimat ist der Wedding, sein Ursprung die Seele des außerhalb der Gesetze stehenden, sein Zweck ist der Rausch'.⁵⁷ The *Rummelplatz* is identified as a North Berlin innovation ('Wedding'), created for those unable to afford the journey or entry fee to the more salubrious venue,

⁵³ The catalyst for the hyper-inflationary period had been the French occupation of Germany's industrial centre, the Ruhrgebiet, a measure taken in response to Germany's defaulting on the reparation payments stipulated by the Treaty of Versailles. The government's reaction of "passive resistance" cost the country millions of Marks, as workers sat out the invasion and ignored all demands made by the occupying forces. Anyone with monetary assets faced financial ruin.

⁵⁴ Roth, 'Sorgen', p. 993.

⁵⁵ Joseph Roth, 'Berliner Vergnügungsindustrie', in Roth, *Werke*, vol. 3 (Cologne: Kiepenheuer & Witsch, 1991), pp. 211–215 (p. 213).

⁵⁶ See Fritzsche, *Als Berlin zur Weltstadt wurde*, p. 172.

⁵⁷ Joseph Roth, 'Rummel bis zehn', in Roth, *Werke*, vol. 1, pp. 808–810 (p. 808).

the Lunapark, built in Halensee in the west of the city in 1909, and established by 1910 as Europe's largest amusement park, attracting thousands to its fireworks, theatres, revues, boxing matches and fun-fair rides.⁵⁸

Roth renders the world of entertainment as experienced by ordinary Berliners in terms that are both sympathetic – he expresses disapproval at an administrative court's supposed decision to impose a closing time of ten p.m. because of the noise – and unequivocally partial: 'Ich lobe mir die proletarischen Rummelplätze'.⁵⁹ At the same time, Roth's portrayals of the *Rummelplatz* also acknowledge the depressed character of the sites' surroundings. The fairgrounds are said to nestle in the urban gloom of the city, their location on building sites a reflection of their provisional nature. Roth describes them, however, as vivid elements in what is otherwise perceived as a bleak landscape:

Sie liegen auf öden Bauplätzen, eingeschachtelt zwischen hohen Wänden, Häuserblocks, überschleiert vom Ruß der Stadtbahnzüge, in der Nähe der donnernden, durchdonnerten Viadukte, bunte Flecke unter grauem Großstadtstaub.⁶⁰

Roth's analysis endows *Rummelplätze* with a particular aesthetic quality; they are also a clear articulation of the antithesis between the least advantaged and the better off. The patrons of the fairground hail from Berlin's deprived areas. Roth includes in this group girls who seem destined to be prostitutes, and pimps who are described as being in possession of prominent 'Physiognomien',⁶¹ which make them stand out:

[...] in dieser Stadt der physiognomielosen Herdenmenschen. Es sind die einzigen Menschen in Berlin mit einer ausgeprägten

⁵⁸ The Lunapark and similar places representative of the leisure culture were frequently the focus of literary depiction at the time. See, for instance, Hans Kafka, 'Lunapark. Ein Stück Amerika, versuchsweise', in Jäger and Schütz, *Asphalt*, pp. 193–196; Siegfried Kracauer 'Berg- und Talbahn', in Inka Mülder-Bach (ed.), Siegfried Kracauer. *Schriften*, vol. 5.2 (Frankfurt a. M.: Suhrkamp, 1990), pp. 117–119; Gabriele Tergit, 'Lunapark', in Jens Brüning (ed.), Gabriele Tergit. *Blüten der Zwanziger Jahre. Gerichtsreportagen und Feuilletons 1923–1933* (Berlin: Rotation, 1984), pp. 52–55. In her novel *Käsebier erobert den Kurfürstendamm*, Gabriele Tergit includes a character who decides to make the Lunapark the topic of a *feuilleton* article. See Tergit, *Käsebier erobert den Kurfürstendamm* (Berlin: Das Neue Berlin, 2004), p. 33.

⁵⁹ Roth, 'Berliner Bilderbuch', p. 119.

⁶⁰ Ibid.

⁶¹ Roth, 'Berliner Bilderbuch', p. 119.

Gesichtsarchitektur, die von innern Kämpfen Zeugnis ablegt, von zeichnenden Erlebnissen, von schweren Nöten.⁶²

Roth contrasts the distinctive, expressive physiognomies of the pimps on the *Rummelplatz* with the nondescript appearance of men found at the Lunapark and in the realms of politics:

Im Lunapark und im Reichstag sieht man männliche Masken, Umhänge und Schnauzbärte, bürgerliche Glatzen, faschistische und kommunistische Kostüme und Gesichter, die von gar nichts anderm erzählen als von Gelderwerb, ehelichem Beischlaf, väterlichem Erfolg, Berufsjubiläen und Bierabenden.⁶³

It is a comparison that serves as a social typology of the city's amusement venues, as well as being a potential provocation to the educated middle-class reader, who might have identified rather more with the Lunapark attendees. Moreover, Roth locates the places of entertainment sought out by everyday Berliners, transforming unremarkable spaces that were on what Katrin Dördelmann terms the 'Randzonen Berlins'⁶⁴ into central features of readers' mental images of Berlin's *Stadtbild*. The *Rummelplatz* can be read in this sense as a crucial part of the topographical hierarchy that emerges from Roth's works, which foregrounds social spaces as a means of highlighting the class discrepancies he thought typified Berlin and its population.

3.4 Spaces of Difference

While Roth continually pursues themes centred on class difference and societal ills, his articles can be said to be notable for his avoidance of reducing marginalised figures or groups to victims and, as Jon Hughes notes, when portraying particular places or people, Roth 'does not emphasize his own separateness by concluding with a description of his relief upon leaving'.⁶⁵ Emblematic of precisely this process of abandoning himself to the object of his accounts are his unsensationalist articles on homelessness and death in the city.⁶⁶ The literary representation of people on the move or in exile, and the

⁶² Ibid.

⁶³ Ibid.

⁶⁴ Katrin Dördelmann, 'Die Darstellung Berlins in der populären Zeitschriftenpresse, 1870-1933', in Brunn and Reulecke (eds), *Metropolis Berlin*, pp. 127-150 (p. 139).

⁶⁵ Hughes, 'Joseph Roth in France', p. 135.

⁶⁶ Roth's journalistic oeuvre is notable for its concentration overall on spaces of sanctuary in

spaces they inhabit in the city, figure centrally in Roth's oeuvre.⁶⁷ In this context, his interest is directed on the one hand at homeless citizens living in shelters in Berlin and their reliance on a constellation of welfare institutions that necessitated regular movement between the city's districts. On the other hand, Roth examines the type of metaphorical homelessness experienced by the Eastern European Jews who migrated to Berlin in the 1920s after the Russian Revolution and the First World War with its ensuing political turbulence. Both areas of focus – here subdivided into homelessness and Jewish space – address concepts of movement and (im)mobility, and are the visible expression of political and socio-economic problems in post-war Berlin.

3.4.1 Homelessness

In 'Bei den Heimatlosen', published in 1920 in the *Neue Berliner-Zeitung*, Roth presents the reader with a description of a homeless shelter and its visitors in Fröbelstraße, in the north-eastern district of Prenzlauer Berg. The central motif of his article is the extremes of hardship. Far from being prurient, Roth's interest in the poor is based on the wish to gain insight into, and convey how, the homeless live, which he does by means of semi-sociological observations. While he does not refer to his separateness from the homeless, Roth nevertheless advances through the spaces of the shelter as a visitor, his free movement at odds with the lack of agency that marks the lives of those he describes.

Roth structures his article with the use of sub-sections, beginning with the so-called 'Revers', an indemnity contract between the person seeking shelter and the asylum (which sanctions his or her internment), before focusing on the

Berlin that satisfied human requirements such as warmth, food and company among like-minded people. These also included railway stations, cinemas, shelters for sufferers of nervous diseases, and asylums for artists.

⁶⁷ His focus on homelessness, mobility and movement can arguably be attributed to his own peripatetic lifestyle during the 1920s and 1930s. Throughout his life Roth opted to forego a fixed abode, and instead lived on a temporary basis in a string of hotels. His frequent portrayals of people that lacked a sense of belonging can be traced to his background. His father was absent for the majority of his childhood because of mental illness. After serving in the army for two years, Roth returned to Vienna and was confronted by a world fundamentally altered. The disintegration of the Habsburg Empire in 1918 resulted in the loss of Roth's homeland. Part of his preoccupation with citizens living in areas of neglect in Berlin and, arguably most personal to Roth, the topic of eastern immigration and the loss of roots, have been attributed to the loss felt by Roth in view of an absent father figure and the

outward appearance of the shelter ('Das Haus'), later moving to the 'Saal und Menschen', and finally presenting the case of a displaced Russian former officer ('Der Oberstleutnant'). The text's division reflects in part the kind of separation the asylum's occupants are themselves subject to within the shelter, men at a distance from women and youths, and families grouped together in divided 'Holzbuden'.⁶⁸

The article opens, then, with a facsimile of the *Revers*, and Roth shows the conditions under which individuals are admitted to be deliberately perplexing. The document is written in the type of bureaucratic German critiqued by Roth in a number of articles for targeting those least capable of assimilating the information.⁶⁹

*Der ... [sic] wurde angewiesen, binnen fünf Tage ein anderweitiges Unterkommen sich zu beschaffen, widrigenfalls und wenn er nicht nachweisen könnte, daß er solches aller angewandten Bemühungen ungeachtet nicht vermocht habe, er wegen Nichtbeschaffung eines Unterkommens werde bestraft werden. Demselben wurde auch ausdrücklich bedeutet, daß nach § 361m Nr. 8, des Strafgesetzbuches für das Deutsche Reich diese Strafe in Haft bis zu 6 Wochen besteht [...].*⁷⁰ [original italics]

The inclusion of the excerpt of the contract in Roth's article serves to convey the character of the location, which he perceives of as lacking in compassion and with regulations that are out of touch with the times. It captures the somewhat absurd attempt by authorities to limit the intake of people at a point in time when housing was substandard and, above all, insufficient.⁷¹ Roth argues against the strict entry policy by asking: 'Beweist nicht eher die Geschicklichkeit, sich nach fünf Tagen heutzutage in Berlin eine Wohnung zu beschaffen, Reife für Gefängnis?'⁷²

collapse of the empire.

⁶⁸ Joseph Roth, 'Bei den Heimatlosen', in Roth, *Werke*, vol. 1, pp. 373–377 (p. 375).

⁶⁹ See also 'Die Dinglichkeitsliste des Wohnungsamtes', in Roth, *Werke*, vol. 1, pp. 345–346; 'Die graue Karte', in Roth, *Werke*, vol. 1, pp. 864–866. The former article addresses the inhumane and jargonistic language used by bureaucratic institutions in Berlin, while in the latter, Roth provides an account of how he queues with others in the early hours of the morning at the housing office in Friedrichstraße. He observes critically the contrast between the few hours worked by bureaucrats and the early time at which the poor are expected to arrive, only to have to wait outdoors in the cold for long periods.

⁷⁰ Roth, 'Heimatlose', p. 373.

⁷¹ Berlin doubled in population between 1900 and 1920, after the *Groß-Berlin-Gesetz* was passed and, in addition to returning soldiers, the arrival of large numbers of refugees led to a crisis in the provision of living quarters.

⁷² Roth, 'Heimatlose', p. 374.

The officialdom detectable in the language of the *Revers* also shapes the shelter's exterior, described as:

Rote Ziegelsteine. Die trostlose Uniform aus Strenge und Dauerhaftigkeit, an der bei uns zulande Behörden, Spitäler, Gefängnisse, Schulen, Postämter und Gotteshäuser zu erkennen sind. Vergeblich bemüht sich ein Garten mit herbstbunten Bäumen, der Staatlichkeit des Unternehmens einen rührenden Zug zu verleihen. Das Haus bleibt ziegelrot und Behörde und sieht aus, wie gewaltsam mitten in die Natur hineingestellt.⁷³

The shelter is a space marked by the powers of authority, and Roth refers to it as an anomaly in the (urban) environment. A little further on in the article he refers to the shelter's vicinity as being composed of 'ein Hof, zehn Kieselsteine, ein Baum'.⁷⁴ The meagre list of physical attributes, and the asylum's location 'in einer Gegend Berlins, in der überhaupt eine ziegelrote Atmosphäre herrscht',⁷⁵ adds to the sense of austerity that defines the area. Roth's portrait of the asylum's outward form and setting exemplifies his wider conception of Berlin as cold, unfeeling and driven by purpose.⁷⁶ Indeed, Berlin's welfare organisations feature also as a symbol of the city's rationality and overall limited empathy in Roth's novel *Die Flucht ohne Ende* from 1927. Here, the protagonist Franz Tunda describes how care institutions have not been founded purely on humanitarian grounds, but that they existed first and foremost in order to prevent disruption to the city's order:

In [... Berlin] würden noch viel mehr Menschen umkommen, wenn nicht tausend vorsichtige, fürsorgliche Einrichtungen Leben und Gesundheit schützten, nicht weil das Herz es befiehlt, sondern weil ein Unfall eine Verkehrstörung bedeutet, Geld kostet und die Ordnung verletzt.⁷⁷

Roth's article does not present an explicit critique of the times that produced the homelessness, but he raises awareness of its profound effects on individual lives by focusing on the issue of spatial intimacy. Roth studies, for example, the

⁷³ Roth, 'Heimatlose', p. 374

⁷⁴ Roth, 'Heimatlose', p. 376.

⁷⁵ Roth, 'Heimatlose', p. 374.

⁷⁶ The essential coldness of Berlin is a dominant trope in Roth's oeuvre. See, for example, the following description of Berlin, representative of Roth's attitude: 'Diese Stadt, in ihrer Hast herzlos, nüchtern durch ihrem deutlichen Drang zur Zweckmäßigkeit und dort, wo sie gefühlvoll zu sein versucht, so oft an der Peripherie des Kitsches'. Joseph Roth, 'Abschied vom Toten' in Roth, *Werke*, vol. 2, pp. 354–358 (p. 354).

⁷⁷ Joseph Roth, *Die Flucht ohne Ende*, in Roth, *Werke*, vol. 4 (Cologne: Kiepenheuer & Witsch, 1990), pp. 389–496 (p. 464).

shelter's dormitory, and concentrates on the limited area occupied by the homeless:

Der Saal ist ungeheuer lang und verhältnismäßig schmal. Man könnte hier spazierengehen, stünden die Betten nicht quer, militärisch in zwei Reihen einander gegenüber. In der Mitte im Gang der Länge nach auch Betten. Eiserne nackte Gestelle, Büsserbetten aus Drahtnetzen. Jeder Obdachlose bekommt eine dünne Decke aus Papierstoff, die allerdings rein und desinfiziert ist. Auf diesen Betten hocken sie, schlafen sie, lagern sie, die Heimatlosen.⁷⁸

Roth shows how private practices are conducted in an open setting, and the personal sphere is reduced in the shelter to a single unit or bed. He presents the reader with images of entire families being similarly affected, though they were permitted to establish at least a semblance of privacy – and individuality – by residing in makeshift wooden constructions within the asylum. Karl Schlögel, speaking about refugee camps in general, alludes to the basic necessity of delineating one's personal space: 'Auch wenn es nur die Einschließung in einem schuhkartonähnlichen Raum ist, eine allgemeine Containerisierung – der Abstand ist das entscheidende'.⁷⁹ Within the restricted spatial dimensions, rudimentary equipment allows for a domestic sphere in which families cook and wash clothes, maintaining routines and a sense of autonomy in an otherwise temporary setting.

The asylums are (then as now) spaces of discontinuity, inhabited by people who are essentially trapped in a cycle of continual movement between one place and another (the *Revers* stipulates a maximum stay of five days). Roth detects symptoms among the shelters' inhabitants that testify to a life on the move:

Alte Männer in Lumpen, mit grauen Bärten, Landstreicher, die Huckepack ein Bündel Vergangenheit auf gekrümmten Rücken schleppen. Ihre Stiefel tragen den Staub zerwanderter Jahrzehnte. Männer in mittlerem Alter, in halben Uniformen, mit braunen Gesichtern, aus Hunger und Härte gemeißelt. [...] Es sind Menschen, die ein Lebensalter wandern müssen.⁸⁰

Roth employs almost identical imagery of dishevelled and impoverished appearances in his novel *Hotel Savoy* (1924), which describes homeless persons arriving at a shelter with the 'Staub zerwanderter Jahre [...] auf ihren

⁷⁸ Roth, 'Heimatlose', p. 375.

⁷⁹ Schlögel, p. 302.

⁸⁰ Roth, 'Heimatlose', p. 375.

Stiefeln'.⁸¹ The overlap of the theme of wandering and his recurring descriptions indicate how topical the issue of diaspora and ensuing mobility remained, a fact reflected in Roth's choice of title for his article, which alludes to the concept of being not merely unhoused (*obdachlos*), but with no native country or homeland (*heimatlos*) and thus without space.

In the same article, Roth foregrounds the human dimension of homelessness in Berlin by speaking with a Russian ex-officer who fled the Bolshevik Revolution. Matthew Stibbe outlines how Russian former prisoners of war and refugees were often distrusted in Germany and 'viewed as either communist agitators or simply as unworthy competitors for food, housing and jobs'.⁸² Nevertheless, Roth 'saß bei ihm, mit ihm in seiner Holzbude'.⁸³ The officer is shown to be aware of the financial strain he imposes on a state already subsidising the lives of thousands of underprivileged persons: 'Er möchte gerne arbeiten. Er will der Stadt nicht so zur Last fallen.'⁸⁴ The contrast between his former life and current existence is brought into vivid relief by the confines of an improvised space within the shelter, and Roth suggests the similarities between the officer's fate and German refugees; they are united in their dependence on this space of refuge, and in the loss of their previous social standing in the tumult of historical change.

The homeless shelter as a central representation of problems in Berlin's human community (and vital aspect of Roth's mapping of Berlin) resurfaces in Roth's *feuilleton* 'Der Zug der Fünftausend' (1924), an article that exposes further the migratory patterns of Berlin's itinerant citizens. Roth here describes how crowds of homeless people wander 'täglich schweigend durch die Straße'⁸⁵ from the asylum in the Frankfurter Allee in the east of Berlin (from which they might have been ejected in the morning after their stay, or failed to have found a place) to the shelter in the northern Fröbelstraße in order to find a roof for the coming night. Whereas 'Bei den Heimatlosen' presents the interior spaces occupied by the poor, his description of their march through Berlin externalises homelessness, and Roth emphasises how the poverty demonstrated in this

⁸¹ Joseph Roth, *Hotel Savoy*, in Roth, *Werke*, vol. 4, pp. 147–242 (p. 202). The *feuilleton* 'Bei den Heimatlosen', states: 'Ihre Stiefel tragen den Staub zerwanderter Jahrzehnte', p. 375.

⁸² Stibbe, p. 84.

⁸³ Roth, 'Heimatlose', p. 376.

⁸⁴ Ibid.

⁸⁵ Joseph Roth, 'Der Zug der Fünftausend', in Roth, *Werke*, vol. 2, pp. 81–84 (p. 83).

‘Zug’ is all the more distressing for its being on plain display during their journey to the shelter. It is public, not hidden away:

Obwohl das eindringlichste Kennzeichen des Elends, der Geruch, sich erst in den Sälen ausbreitet und obwohl erst hier, im Innern des Asyls, die ganze große Traurigkeit ihr bitterstes Angesicht enthüllt – dennoch ist die Wirkung der dahinziehenden Armut stärker, nachhaltiger als die der ruhend gehäuften.⁸⁶

The poor in Roth’s article are shown to inhabit a distinct temporal space, removed from the rhythm of modern culture, as he makes clear in a paragraph that contrasts dynamic urban markers with the unhurried movement of the homeless:

Straßenbahnen klingeln, die Drähte kündigen summend neue Wagen an. Die Straße mit ihren kleinen großen Ereignissen, ihre Gefährte und die flotte Buntheit ihrer Liffaßsäulen, die auch hier die neueste Operette ankündigen, bilden zusammen jenen Gegensatz, durch den der Zug der Obdachlosen seine dramatische Wirkung gewinnt.⁸⁷

The poor are out of step with the times, and that this is happening in paradoxical audible silence heightens the striking effect of their wandering:

Dieses Schweigen ist das hörbarste Geräusch, das in der Welt entstehen kann [...]. Man hört nur Keuchen, Husten, Aufschlagen der Krücken in Intervallen, das Schlurfen zerrissener und nachhängender Stiefelsohlen, das Wimmern eines Kindes.⁸⁸

Comparable to a filmic or photographic mode, Roth arranges his impressions and describes distinctive actions taking place concurrently, thus conveying the sense of the group’s simultaneous movement (‘Zug’). It can be said that, by way of their scheduled route through the urban landscape, the street functions as a type of stage, on which the homeless – themselves a spatial entity when in a group – publicise the fact that they are not isolated (geographically and economically) from the rest of the city (in shelters) but are part of it and shape the public sphere through their visibility. Their meandering journeys between asylums constitute a form of space-making in terms of the physical area they routinely occupy in the city, and the urban topography they must negotiate in order to have access to temporary respite. Schlögel notes in his chapter on

⁸⁶ Roth, ‘Zug der Fünftausend’, p. 82.

⁸⁷ Ibid.

⁸⁸ Ibid.

human biographies the ‘mappability’ of the everyday paths taken by people in the course of living life, stating: ‘Das Festeste im Leben sind die zur Routine gewordenen Bewegungsabläufe’.⁸⁹ Roth charts precisely this phenomenon in his accounts, making evident the daily movements of the poor, whose schedule is dictated by the asylum’s restricted opening hours.

Closely connected to Roth’s mapping of homelessness – achieved by making the marginalised world of the poor his central subject – he also shines a spotlight on the anonymous dead in Berlin. Crucially, he appears to suggest that they are products of their environment. Roth’s articles continually thematise the loneliness and brutality of urban existence, which he attributes to the dominant metropolitan mentality: individuality at all costs and, interrelated with this, anonymity. Georg Simmel diagnosed both types of human behaviour in the early twentieth-century as a consequence of the experience of modernity. He subsequently identified a particular urban personality, which, when confronted with the city’s tempo, its diversity, and the potential for antagonism between metropolitan groups, developed a tendency towards self-preservation and indifference.⁹⁰

Roth’s Berlin reports offer numerous examples of the urban malaise that he believed affected Berlin’s residents. In ‘Betrachtung über den Verkehr’ (1924), for instance, Roth captures the hostility that exists between city dwellers, in particular when sharing public transport. He ventures to assert that traffic accidents can be directly ascribed to metaphysical reasons: the toxic atmosphere on a bus crowded with passengers who harbour resentment towards their neighbour (for political or other reasons) cannot *but* lead to eventual catastrophe, a crash:

Die Stimmung im Wagen überträgt sich auf den Lenker. Jeder ist gekränkt. Niemand macht den stehenden Frauen Platz. Jeder sieht in dem andern den Feind. Einer wirft dem andern wütende Blicke zu. Den hält man für einen Juden, jenen für einen “Bolschewisten”.⁹¹

Roth links the fate of outsiders with the cold nature of society in 1920s Berlin, and specifically the lack of compassion among fellow human beings. This is explicitly illustrated in a *feuilleton* item that draws attention to the unidentified

⁸⁹ Schlögel, p. 369.

⁹⁰ Simmel, *Die Großstädte und das Geistesleben*, p. 11, p. 19.

⁹¹ Joseph Roth, ‘Betrachtung über den Verkehr’, in Roth, *Werke*, vol. 2, pp. 276–280 (p. 279).

dead recovered in the city. In the article 'Die Toten ohne Namen' from 1923, as well as in his later novel *Rechts und Links* (1929), Roth – and his character Paul Bernheim – visit Berlin's main police station at Alexanderplatz, where they proceed to study the photographs of the deceased, recovered in public spaces in Berlin, and who remain unknown. The harmful aspects of urban life are on plain display in the '*Photographenschaukästen des Polizeipräsidiums, im Parterre*'⁹² [original italics]. Of note are the vivid descriptions of the dead, photographed at the scene of death:

Da sind Bärtige und Bartlose, Frauen und Männer, Jünglinge und Greise. Sie wurden *auf den Straßen* gefunden, im *Tiergarten*, in *Spreekanälen*. [...] Die Wasserleichen sind aufgedunsen, von Schlammkrusten bedeckt [...]. Die Kruste auf ihren Gesichtern hat Risse und Sprünge wie eine schlecht verwahrte Gipsmaske. Die Brüste der Frauen sind schauerhaft geschwollen, die Züge verzerrt, die Haare wie ein Häufchen Kehrlicht auf gedunsenem Kopf.⁹³
[original italics]

Roth associates their anonymity in death with their invisibility in life; they had 'keine Freunde, sie haben einsam gelebt, sie sind vergessen gestorben',⁹⁴ or, as his character Bernheim observes: 'So viele Menschen verschwanden also aus dem Leben – und niemand hatte sie gekannt'.⁹⁵ The deceased, much like the wandering homeless persons, lacked a designated space in society.

The bodies found are mostly of those 'die man "die unteren" nennt, weil sie zufällig unten sind'.⁹⁶ These are economically vulnerable individuals, the homeless poor and the insane. Roth correlates casualties and social class, alluding to the fact that middle-class persons were a rarity among the victims.⁹⁷ Helen Chambers makes the vital point that Roth confers upon 'den marginalisierten Opfern der Gesellschaft Subjektstatus [...], und [macht] sie somit im Tod sichtbar'.⁹⁸ Their visibility is heightened by Roth's inclusion of the precise dates of death and the location of the bodies' discovery:

⁹² Joseph Roth, 'Die Toten ohne Namen', in Roth, *Werke*, vol. 1, pp. 914–916 (p. 914).

⁹³ Roth, 'Die Toten', p. 915.

⁹⁴ Roth, 'Die Toten', p. 916.

⁹⁵ Joseph Roth, *Rechts und Links*, in Roth, *Werke*, vol. 4, pp. 609–772 (p. 678).

⁹⁶ Roth, 'Die Toten', p. 915.

⁹⁷ See Roth's comment: 'Selten nur wächst so ein Totenkopf aus einem Stehkragen dem europäischen Abzeichen des Bürgertums', in Roth, 'Die Toten ohne Namen', p. 915.

⁹⁸ Chambers, "'Die Toten ohne Namen'", in Eicher (ed.), *Joseph Roth und die Reportage*, p. 89.

Einer wurde am 2. Dezember 1921 im *Abort des Potsdamer Bahnhofs* gefunden. Am 25. Juni 1920 wurde jene Frau unbestimmten Alters aus dem *Reichstagsufer der Spree* gezogen. Am 25. Janur 1918 starb jener bärtige, zahnlose Kopf am *Alexanderplatz*. Am 8. Mai des Jahres 1922 starb dieser, ein junger Mann mit friedlichen Zügen, *auf einer Bank am Arminiusplatz*. [original italics]

Roth does not only map death in the city, connecting specific urban spaces – including Berlin’s railway stations, canals and waterways – with danger and fatality;⁹⁹ he in fact elucidates early on in the article how the unidentified dead whose photos hang in a display case on a wall at the police station are the visible expression of the anonymity and hardship that epitomise Berlin. In a key passage Roth establishes a direct relationship between the shocking portraits and the city:

Das ist die grausame Ausstellung der grausamen Stadt, in deren asphaltierten Straßen, graubeschatteten Parks und blauen Kanälen der Tod lauert, mit Revolver, Knebel und betäubendem Chloroform. Das ist sozusagen die anonyme Seite der Großstadt, ihr Elend, daß keinen Namen hat. Das sind ihre unbekannten Kinder, deren Leben Unrast, Kneipe und Verborgenheit heißt, deren Ende blutig ist und gewaltsam, ein mörderisches Finale.¹⁰⁰

The photographs are a metaphor for the city and the threat it poses to its urban poor. Above all, Roth draws attention to a crisis which, as Chambers states, ‘in der Großstadt unter der Oberfläche versteckt und ungeahnt bleibt’.¹⁰¹ For that reason, Roth writes, the images of the dead ought to be transferred from the police station, where ‘niemand [...] vor den Schaukästen [stehenbleibt], um sich die Toten anzusehen’, to a place more prominent, ‘an weit sichtbarem Platz, in der Mitte der Stadt, deren Sinnbild er ist’.¹⁰²

One can observe from Roth’s study of asylums the unfolding of historical experience – war, revolution, and displacement – in specific spaces. Along with his portrayal of the photographs of the dead, Roth alerts readers to Berlin’s social underside and how it has a defined spatial existence in the city. Roth elevates the shelter from a liminal space to a central place of safety in interwar

⁹⁹ The Landwehrkanal is particularly symbolic of spaces of danger in Berlin. Four years prior to Roth’s article, the body of Communist leader Rosa Luxemburg was recovered from the canal, several months after her murder in January 1919. Gabriele Tergit also focuses on the Landwehrkanal as the site of Luxemburg’s death.

¹⁰⁰ Roth, ‘Die Toten’, p. 915.

¹⁰¹ Chambers, “Die Toten ohne Namen”, p. 94, p. 95.

Berlin. In doing so, Roth arguably also hopes to align the reader with the poor. He moulds perceptions of Weimar Berlin during the era (and now) by presenting us with a map of the city that places emphasis on what is usually passed over by conventional guidebooks and touristic maps.

3.4.2 Jewish Space

In the same way that Roth draws a distinction between East and West Berlin, his representation of Europe is also marked by a sense of duality. Roth's journalistic essay 'Juden auf Wanderschaft',¹⁰³ which adds East European Jewish space in particular to his map of Berlin, addresses the topic of Jews in Europe on a broader scale, and in Berlin specifically. His essay develops a number of themes arising from earlier *feuilleton* articles that examine life and customs of Eastern European – predominantly Jewish – refugees in interwar Berlin.¹⁰⁴ 'Juden auf Wanderschaft' details the historical misconceptions by Eastern European Jews about western Europe, a part of the world frequently viewed as synonymous with 'Freiheit, die Möglichkeit zu arbeiten und seine Talente zu entfalten, Gerechtigkeit und autonome Herrschaft des Geistes' (828). Conversely, Roth critiques and seeks to dispel prejudices held by the West about Jews worldwide in the light of globally expanding anti-Semitism. While his essay takes up issues pertaining to nationality and identity, it is also emphatically spatial and explores the concept of living space in Berlin, comparing the kinds of existences led by Eastern European Jews in the ghettos of western cities that were common destinations for those fleeing discrimination and poverty: Vienna, Berlin, Paris and New York. The focus here will be on Roth's representation of the space inhabited by mostly Ukrainian and Galician Jews in Berlin, and in particular the spatial relation between the Scheunenviertel (the chief Jewish district in the city) and the rest of Berlin. What emerges from his essay is the sense that Jewish space is geographically, culturally, and temporally separated from its surroundings. At the same time,

¹⁰² Roth, 'Die Toten', p. 914.

¹⁰³ Joseph Roth, 'Juden auf Wanderschaft', in Roth, *Werke*, vol. 2, pp. 827–891. Future references from this source will be indicated by page numbers in round brackets directly after the quotation in the main text.

¹⁰⁴ See 'Der Tempel Salomis in Berlin', in Roth, *Werke*, vol. 1, pp. 381–383; 'Flüchtlinge aus dem Osten', in Roth, *Werke*, vol. 1, pp. 383–386.

however, Roth shows us that the Scheunenviertel is also *lived* space in which real human experience occurs, not a quasi-fabled and myth-laden part of Berlin, existing solely as imagined space in the minds of readers.¹⁰⁵

Roth states about 1920s Vienna: 'Es ist furchtbar schwer ein Ostjude zu sein; es gibt kein schwereres Los als das eines fremden Ostjuden in Wien' (858). He very nearly disqualifies his assertion by stating that Vienna is nevertheless a city characterised by a sense of relative freedom and mobility. The inhabitants of Vienna's Jewish ghetto, Leopoldstadt, have a visible presence and exert considerable economic influence, running their own cafés and businesses. Whilst the area *is* undoubtedly marked by poverty and hardship, Roth registers how the generation of 'Söhne und Töchter der Ostjuden' is seeking a better fortune by working as 'Mediziner, Bankbeamten, Journalisten, Schauspieler' (857). Roth does not expressly note the anti-Semitism that this might have provoked among other Viennese citizens, but *does* refer to Vienna's political parties having manifestos that include 'den Antisemitismus als wichtigen Programmpunkt' (858). In contrast, Roth describes Paris in somewhat hyperbolic terms as nothing less than Arcadian for Eastern European Jews: 'Die Ostjuden leben in Paris fast wie Gott in Frankreich. Niemand hindert sie hier, Geschäfte und sogar Gettos aufzumachen' (872). The Jews settled predominantly in northern and eastern districts of Paris whose religious and cultural freedoms enabled the Jews to assimilate quickly, and with a measure of ease incomparable to the experience of Jews in Vienna and Berlin. Roth terms Paris 'eine wirkliche Weltstadt. Wien ist einmal eine gewesen. Berlin wird erst einmal eine sein' (872). His enthusiasm for the French capital, in his portrayal of Jewish space in 'Juden auf Wanderschaft', as well as in several of his *feuilleton* articles, contrasts starkly with the scepticism and despondency with which he regularly conveys the shock of Berlin. France emerges as a utopian ideal. There are obvious parallels here between depictions of France by Roth and Kurt Tucholsky. Both writers frequently set Berlin against the wider space of France (and Paris in particular), and the

¹⁰⁵ The Jewish Museum in Berlin held an exhibition titled *Berlin Transit. Jüdische Migranten aus Osteuropa in den 1920er Jahren* between March and July 2012. It examined Jewish culture in Berlin during the Weimar period, focusing on the lives of Eastern European Jewish migrants in the Scheunenviertel and those living in Charlottenburg in West Berlin, also known at the time as Charlottengrad on account of the high number of Russian émigrés (among them artists and writers) who settled there after fleeing the Russian Revolution.

German capital always disappoints by comparison: 'In Berlin freut man sich nicht. Aber in Paris herrscht die Freude' (872). Elsewhere, Roth contrasts Berlin's Jewish bars, which are 'traurig, kühl und still' with Parisian Jewish guesthouses, said to be 'lustig, warm und laut' (875). Roth further extols the 'humane Landschaften'¹⁰⁶ of France in his article 'Brief aus Paris' (1926) having first declared his love for Paris (and Prague) two years earlier in 'Heimweh nach Prag' (1924): 'Wenn ich keine Sehnsucht nach Paris hätte, so hätte ich Sehnsucht nach Prag'.¹⁰⁷ Roth's evaluations of capital cities here serve to highlight the harsh conditions he believed were prevalent in Berlin overall, including hostility towards Eastern European Jewish culture, and, by extension, to Roth. About Berlin he writes:

Kein Ostjude geht freiwillig nach Berlin. Wer in aller Welt kommt freiwillig nach Berlin? Berlin ist eine Durchgangsstation, in der man aus zwingenden Gründen länger verweilt. Berlin hat kein Getto. Es hat ein jüdisches Viertel. Hierher kommen die Emigranten, die über Hamburg und Amsterdam nach Amerika wollen. Hier bleiben sie oft stecken. (865)

Roth's use of spatial and temporal language ('Durchgangsstation', 'Getto', 'steckenbleiben'), and the allusion yet again to mobility and wandering, marks Berlin as a space of a transitory nature for East European Jews on the one hand – they remain in its Jewish district until their official papers have been approved and they can travel onwards – and as a more permanent habitat on the other.¹⁰⁸ This sense of progressing in time but not in space is also exemplified by the aforementioned article 'Heimweh nach Prag', in which Roth likens Berlin to a large railway station from which he still expects to depart, despite having been resident in the city for five years at the time of writing: 'Ich

¹⁰⁶ Joseph Roth, 'Brief aus Paris', in Roth, *Werke*, vol. 2, pp. 551–552 (p. 551).

¹⁰⁷ Joseph Roth, 'Heimweh nach Prag', in Roth, *Werke*, vol. 2, pp. 308–309 (p. 308).

¹⁰⁸ Tobias Brinkmann examines Berlin as a crossing point for Eastern Jewish migrants after 1918, noting that their onward-journey to other countries – preferred destinations were American cities New York, Chicago and Philadelphia, as well as European capitals such as Budapest, Vienna and London – were often delayed by Germany's stringent immigration laws, resulting in lengthy bureaucratic processes. Brinkmann writes: 'Die preußischen Behörden begannen in den 1880er Jahren, den Zuzug von Ausländern aus dem Osten durch diverse "administrative Maßnahmen" zu unterbinden. Die polizeiliche Meldepflicht und das damit einhergehende Damoklesschwert der Ausweisung erklären, warum viele potentielle Zuwanderer Berlin und andere deutsche Städte links liegen ließen und weiter wanderten.' Tobias Brinkmann, 'Ort des Übergangs. Berlin als Schnittstelle der jüdischen Migration aus Osteuropa nach 1918', in Verena Dohrn and Gertrud Pickhan (eds), *Transit und Transformation. Osteuropäisch-jüdische Migranten in Berlin 1918-1939* (Göttingen: Wallstein, 2010), pp. 25–44 (p. 26).

lebe seit fünf Jahren in Berlin. Ich sitze da wie im Wartesaal eines großen Bahnhofs und warte auf den Zug'.¹⁰⁹

Joseph Roth's account of Jewish space in Berlin in 'Juden auf Wanderschaft' focuses on the Hirtenstraße, one of the poorest streets in the Scheunenviertel. Described by Roth as an area that comprises 'nur ein paar kleine Judenstraßen' (867), the Scheunenviertel was situated adjacent to Alexanderplatz, in the northeast of Berlin. In the seventeenth century the quarter was an agglomeration of barns used to store hay for cattle traded at Alexanderplatz, then a cattle market. In 1737 the Prussian King Friedrich Wilhelm I decreed that all homeless Jews must move into the Scheunenviertel, and by the early twentieth century it was one of the most densely populated centres of Jewish life in Berlin.¹¹⁰ Significantly, only a minority of Jews who travelled to Berlin before the First World War settled here. A large percentage of secular-minded Jews from Western Europe opted for the more middle-class districts in western districts of the city, where they assimilated and were considerably more prosperous than those scattered by the war or pogroms.¹¹¹ The Scheunenviertel thus had a history of being perceived as a foreign body in Berlin, home to the most impoverished refugees from the east and regarded in the 1920s as 'Berlin's most notorious slum'.¹¹² David Clay Large observes how:

[...] the majority of Berliners, including assimilated Jews who lived in the wealthier Western parts of the city, rarely visited the Scheunenviertel, and when they did they found a world that struck them as quite foreign.¹¹³

Endeavours to demolish the area succeeded in the early 1930s with the National Socialists, who 'openly linked the neighbourhood's seedy reputation with its Jewish population'.¹¹⁴

¹⁰⁹ Roth, 'Heimweh', p. 308.

¹¹⁰ Scheunenviertel triggers a range of associations in the 1920s and now, not least because of the literary representation of its seedier side in Alfred Döblin's *Berlin Alexanderplatz* (1929). Döblin's text captures the crime, poverty and prostitution that marks Scheunenviertel in the wanderings of his protagonist Franz Biberkopf.

¹¹¹ Brian Ladd, *The Ghosts of Berlin. Confronting German History in The Urban Landscape* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1997), p. 113.

¹¹² Ladd, p. 113.

¹¹³ David Clay Large, "'Out with the Ostjuden': The Scheunenviertel Riots in Berlin, November 1923", in Christhard Hoffmann, Werner Bergmann and Helmut Walser Smith (eds), *Exclusionary Violence: Antisemitic Riots in Modern German History* (Michigan: University of Michigan Press, 2002), pp. 123–140 (p. 129).

¹¹⁴ Ladd, p. 114.

¹¹³ Clay Large, p. 129.

Roth describes Hirtenstraße as 'die jüdischste aller Berliner Straßen' (867) though it nevertheless retains attributes that define it as still 'belonging' to Berlin: 'Die Hirtenstraße ist eine Berliner Straße, gemildert durch ostjüdische Einwohner, aber nicht verändert' (867). Roth's comment suggests the difficulties encountered by the Jews in leaving their cultural imprint on the area in an attempt to make it more their own. Among the small number of reminders that Jews inhabit the Hirtenstraße are the 'jüdische Talmudschulen und Bethäuser' (867) that cater to religious and educational needs. Roth notes that the few Hebrew letters in evidence inscribed on the sides of buildings appear 'fremd an diesen Mauern' (867), which marks the Eastern European Jews out as the 'other'. At the same time, however, the Hirtenstraße, far from appearing 'quite foreign',¹¹⁵ is portrayed by Roth as:

langweilig vororthaft. Sie hat nicht den Charakter einer Kleinstadtstraße. Sie ist neu, billig, schon verbraucht, Schundware. Eine Gasse aus einem Warenhaus. [...] Sie hat einige blinde Schaufenster. Jüdisches Gebäck, Mohnbeugel, Semmeln, schwarze Brote liegen in den Schaufenstern. (867)

The existence of markers of Jewish life in the effectively non-Jewish 'Berliner Straße' (867) creates a tension that underpins the displacement of the Jews in a foreign country. Roth calls attention to their cultural and, moreover, social exclusion from the rest of Berlin by stressing the complete absence of any form of public transport in the street: 'Keine Straßenbahn durchfährt sie. Kein Autobus. Selten ein Auto' (867). The Hirtenstraße is neither a destination nor a thoroughfare; the residents' means of travelling out of the area are correspondingly deficient. The actual spatial proximity of Alexanderplatz increases the sense of the Hirtenstraße and Scheunenviertel as enclosed spaces that are remote from modern culture and without wider interaction with the city. The Jews' physical immobility stands out against the era's cult of speed and movement.

Roth's portrayal of the Hirtenstraße and Scheunenviertel is notable overall for how it presents the area as being demarcated by unseen but defined geographic boundaries, and efforts to transcend the limits are continually thwarted. The Jews have little influence over the space, and Roth, who opposes

assimilation and the conscious adoption of western customs ('Die Emigranten, assimilieren sich – leider! – nicht zu langsam, wie man ihnen vorwirft, sondern viel zu rasch an unsere traurigen Lebensbedingungen') (832), encourages the cultivation of a ghetto as a means of expansion. His essay is quick to point out that Berlin at the time has no ghetto; he reveals how efforts by the Jews to transform the Hirtenstraße into one are defeated, seemingly by the city itself:

Der Versuch diese langweilige, so gut wie möglich saubergehaltene Straße in ein Getto umzuwandeln, ist immer wieder stark. Immer wieder ist Berlin stärker. Die Einwohner kämpfen einen vergeblichen Kampf. Sie wollen sich breitmachen? Berlin drückt sie zusammen. (867)

The concept of a ghetto in this context subverts expectations generally elicited by the term, including ideas of enforced isolation and involuntary separation of one (minority) group from the remainder of society. Roth in this instance causes his readership to engage with a different notion of what a ghetto represents; he links it with a sense of inclusion and, moreover, the idea of free will: Jews make a conscious decision to coexist alongside people who share the same cultural identity. The ghetto thus comes to represent a deliberately separate space – they would elect to live marginally rather than have the status imposed upon them –, as well as a space of tolerance; it is a location supportive of particular conventions, and of a common faith. Roth, however, reminds the reader of Berlin's role in preserving the actual situation of the Eastern European Jews in the city, which is that they lack a ghetto that could foster their way of life, that they are a minor presence, and that the space afforded them in the city is restricted. Berlin is accused of the homogenisation of the Jewish culture: 'Berlin gleicht die Verschiedenen aus und ertötet Eigenheiten. Deshalb gibt es kein großes Berliner Getto' (867).

The theory of creating a geographically more fixed living space constitutes part of a larger treatise by Roth on the Jews' historical 'homelessness'. He terms them 'Menschen im Exil' (835). The topic of itinerant lives and lack of a nation state reached its high point during the 1920s, influenced by the effects of the Russian Revolution, war, and especially the rise of xenophobia and anti-Semitism in Germany. The enforced mobility of Jews was due in part to the threat of attacks and uprisings by nationalistic elements in Berlin. In his study of

the riots that occurred in the Scheunenviertel in November 1923,¹¹⁶ Clay Large includes a passage by Alfred Döblin who was witness to scenes of looting and violence, which he captured in his article 'Während der Schlacht singen die Musen' (1923). Observing the destruction of businesses, Döblin notes: 'An den Ecken mächtige drängende Menschenhaufen; eingeschlagene Schaufenster und Läden. [...] Große Verängstigung unter den Juden vor den nächsten Tagen; das "Exil" wird vielen wieder deutlich'.¹¹⁷ Roth also refers to the Jews' readiness for sudden departure:

Man muß immer auf dem Sprung sein, alles mit sich führen, das Brot und eine Zwiebel in der Tasche, in der anderen die Gebetriemen. Wer weiß, ob man in der nächsten Stunde nicht schon wieder wandern muß (869).

This wandering lifestyle, an organised form of moving around, and the permanent threat of having to vacate their living quarters, are seen to mark the Jews' relationship with the area. They are not (or cannot be) rooted in or rely on the space as a safe realm, and Roth describes the effects of this on both the physiognomy of the Hirtenstraße, and its inner – religious and social – life: 'In dieser Gegend wird alles improvisiert: der Tempel durch die Zusammenkunft, der Handel durch das Stehenbleiben in der Straßenmitte' (869). Markets, small squalid inns, bars and a theatre are communal places of a provisional nature. Similarly mutable (and multifunctional) are meeting houses that switch from being places of worship in the morning and at night, to businesses during the day. In accordance with Sighard Neckel's assertion that 'Die soziale Realität [...] sich in die physische Welt des Raumes geradezu ein[schreibt]',¹¹⁸ Roth's essay captures the correspondence between conditions for Jews in the Scheunenviertel and the bearing these have upon the built environment. He notes their confined existence, their improvised way of life, the dirty and

¹¹⁶ Clay Large points out that the precise causes of the riots have been subject to much analysis by historians. Some blame frustration among unemployed workers, others point to rightist elements in society who stirred up resentment, which subsequently spilled over into violence towards Ostjuden. He in fact dismisses both extremes, alerting us to the fact that anti-Semitic feelings ran through all sectors of German society. See Clay Large, "Out with the Ostjuden", p. 124, p. 125.

¹¹⁷ Alfred Döblin, 'Während der Schlacht singen die Musen', in Döblin, *Ein Kerl muß eine Meinung haben. Berichte und Kritiken 1921-1924* (Olten: Walter, 1976), pp. 220–223 (p. 220, p. 221).

¹¹⁸ Neckel, 'Felder, Relationen, Ortseffekte', in Csáky and Leitgeb (eds), *Kommunikation – Gedächtnis – Raum*, p. 47.

dilapidated buildings, and remarks on the all round depressed milieu: 'So traurig ist keine Straße der Welt' (867).

Hirtenstraße appears to be in a paradoxical state of both dynamism and stasis, reminiscent of the space of the homeless shelter. In a similar way in which the homeless are, on the one hand, fixed in place by virtue of their dependency on aid but are forced, on the other, to be mobile in order to receive said support, the (involuntary) nomadism of the Eastern European Jews in Berlin contrasts with the immobility they experience within the boundaries of the space they occupy. A further similarity lies in the ways in which Roth's chapter on Eastern Jews in Berlin's Scheunenviertel does not deny their difference (though it avoids exoticising the Jews); indeed, he underscores how the Jews are divided from everyday society – as are the homeless. In doing so, however, Roth also makes visible what were perceived as closed (because seemingly foreign) spaces. On a final note, Roth's depiction in 1927 of Berlin's Jewish district – highlighting it as a space whose cultural and geographical separation is the result of factors outside of that space – is particularly prescient because of its foresight of the Jews' increasing isolation from German public life after 1933.

3.5 Spaces of Politics

As noted previously, it is possible to see how, in Roth's *feuilletons*, social and spatial aspects are interrelated. Berlin emerges as a space that is structured according to diverse socio-economic conditions and types of conduct. Spaces of the poor and Jews in North and East Berlin are given prominence, while bourgeois milieus and *Bürger* in the west of the city function predominantly in his texts as a means of commenting on injustices in society. However, articles published in the years prior to his portrayal of the plight of the Jews in Germany bring to the surface what he perceived to be the more alarming aspects of *bürgerlich* environments and the 'Kahlköpfe'¹¹⁹ that inhabited them. Significantly, Roth openly links the hostile political atmosphere and rising anti-Semitism during the 1920s with particular locations in Berlin.

¹¹⁹ Roth, 'Variété der Besitzlosen', p. 1005.

Like Kurt Tucholsky, Roth diagnosed with prophetic accuracy, both in his *feuilletons* and the novel *Das Spinnennetz* from 1923, the nationalistic movement on the rise in Berlin in the period between the wars.¹²⁰ While Tucholsky perceived Berlin – the city as an entity – as defined in every respect by politics (and frequently satirised West Berliners as narrow-minded and self-centred, as will be shown in chapter 5), Roth's evaluation was more specific, and he was consistent in his conception of central and western Berlin as the loci of knee-jerk chauvinism and right-wing political violence. For example, in his *feuilleton* 'Interview ohne Worte' from 1924, Roth identifies the prosperous area close to the boulevard Unter den Linden in the city's traditional centre as particularly representative of a malevolent ideology. He portrays it as a:

Gegend [...], in der die Häßlichkeit eines brutalen Betriebes neben der Arroganz einer verschwundenen unglücklichen Zeit in verschiedenen menschlichen Exemplaren offenbar wird. Hier blitzt am Tag das Monokel und in der Dämmerung der Schlagring.¹²¹

Roth's images provoke impressions of threat; the space is ostensibly dominated during daylight hours by representatives of a chauvinistic past, at night by individuals intent on putting their intolerance into practice by violent means. Both Roth and Tucholsky observed how the old ruling elite survived the transition of power from monarchical rule to Weimar democracy, and questioned whether a German revolution had occurred in November 1918 at all. They recorded the mourning of former values by conservative thinkers and, above all, the continuation of nationalistic, militaristic tendencies in Germany, despite the end of the imperial form of government. In 'Kaisers Geburtstag' (1925) Roth writes: 'Diese Generation hat [...] das großartige Schauspiel einer Entthronung erlebt, wenn auch nicht das weit schönere einer Revolution'.¹²² In another article from the same year, 'Wie man eine Revolution feiert',¹²³ Roth describes the street celebrations taking place in Paris on Bastille Day in 1925. Roth essentially contrasts what he regarded as the genuine democracy of France, which openly celebrates its freedom from oppressive forces, with Germany and the farce of *its* revolution. Though the article avoids direct comparison between

¹²⁰ Joseph Roth, *Das Spinnennetz*, in Roth, *Werke*, vol. 4, pp. 63–146.

¹²¹ Joseph Roth, 'Interview ohne Worte', in Roth, *Werke*, vol. 2, pp. 48–50 (p. 48).

¹²² Joseph Roth, 'Kaisers Geburtstag', in Roth, *Werke*, vol. 2, pp. 335–337 (p. 336).

¹²³ Joseph Roth, 'Wie man eine Revolution feiert', in Roth, *Werke*, vol. 2, pp. 419–420.

countries, it nevertheless cost Roth the right to publish because it was viewed as too critical of Germany. The censorship demonstrates the limits of free speech in the Republic at the time.¹²⁴

Roth's Berlin *feuilletons* repeatedly transmit the image of a society apparently enslaved to a bourgeois bureaucracy prone to indignation and censorship. They portray the interminable officialdom that filtered down into numerous aspects of life in Berlin, and the unquestioning adherence to rules by bureaucrats and conservative sections of society. Roth perceived this subordinate mentality as emblematic of bourgeois mores, and manifest in, for example, the prudery surrounding, and control of, Weimar art and cultural output.¹²⁵ Roth notes how the changes in cultural life after the First World War had indeed provoked a revolt against aesthetic conventions, but the liberalisation of the arts had failed to reach the old guard in the upper echelons of society, who actively fought to preserve established art forms.¹²⁶ Roth also criticised state involvement in the arts and culture generally, especially the creeping commercialisation of pleasure, and the industrialisation of art, which were thus also subject to greater organisation and control.¹²⁷

Roth regularly condemned the middle and upper classes for remaining out of touch with the new cultural-political times, and his *feuilletons* deal sarcastically with the old-fashioned ideology of particular specimens.¹²⁸ These were, more often than not, portrayed as indistinguishable as individuals: middle-aged civilians or former officers – representatives of imperial times – sporting a monocle and bemoaning a world gone awry. They view it as out of kilter, and

¹²⁴ See Westermann, *Joseph Roth*, p. 49, p. 50.

¹²⁵ Court trials continued to plague a number of authors and artists whose works were deemed too scandalous or obscene in the eyes of the reactionary judiciary, and frequently subject to censorship. Arthur Schnitzler's play *Reigen*, for example, was intermittently banned in the early 1920s, and the artist George Grosz was on trial in 1924 for his drawing collection *Ecce Homo*. The trial was attended and written about by Roth in "'Ecce Homo" vor Gericht', in Roth, *Werke*, vol. 2, pp. 57–58.

¹²⁶ Roth's particular hate figure was Professor Karl Brunner, MP for the Centre Party and self-appointed watchdog in all matters relating to art censorship. See, for example, Roth's articles 'Tiere' in Roth, *Werke*, vol. 1 (Cologne: Kiepenheuer & Witsch, 1989), pp. 665–666; 'Professor Brunner im Hörsaal,' in Roth, *Werke*, vol. 1, pp. 692–693; and 'Brunner bleibt', in Roth, *Werke*, vol. 1, pp. 894–895.

¹²⁷ See Joseph Roth, 'Der falsche Dionysos', in Roth, *Werke*, vol. 1 (pp. 522–524).

¹²⁸ There are similarities between the satirical caricatures by Karl Arnold and Georg Grosz of archetypal 'fat cats' – capitalist industrialists, bourgeois business men – and their *Spießerkultur*, and the figures depicted in Roth's writings. See, for example, Grosz's paintings *Drinnen und Draußen* (1926), or his 1922 picture cycle *Ecce Homo*, which caricatured life in pre- and post-war Germany.

the new world induces feelings of alienation. In 'Der Herr Offizier' (1922), for example, Roth writes: 'Der Herr Offizier ohne Kaiser kommt sich überflüssig vor wie ein Zeiger ohne Zifferblatt; wie ein Magnet, der weit und breit keine Eisensplitter findet'.¹²⁹ Though ridiculing it, Roth saw in this slavish deference to a higher order the survival of imperial mentalities among the middle classes and nobility. These upheld concepts of allegiance, of nationalism and a sense of duty to the state, ways of thinking that were regarded by Roth as the origins of a more dangerous, reactionary mindset.

Roth addresses the issue of surviving imperialist thinking in several articles from the early 1920s that turn their attention to topographical features with political symbolism in Berlin. 'Kaiserbilder', written in 1922, levels criticism at the ongoing representation of Prussian militarism in Berlin in form of Kaiser iconography and 'Gipsbüsten der Hohenzollern'.¹³⁰ Comparable codes of imperial power exist in street names, including the Siegesallee and Königsallee – or 'Mörderallee',¹³¹ as Roth calls it, referring to the scene of the murder of Germany's Jewish foreign secretary Walther Rathenau by right-wing perpetrators in 1922. The names of landmarks and former spaces of power monopolising Berlin's cityscape also constitute reminders of the past, such as the Siegessäule and the Königsplatz, situated between the Reichstag and the park at Tiergarten (Tucholsky addresses the lack of Republican symbolism in Berlin's public spaces; how changing an old street name would in fact represent an act of positive propaganda on behalf of the Republic).¹³² In 'Ein Unpolitischer geht in den Reichstag' from 1924, Roth visits the Reichstag building on the opening day of a new parliamentary session, noting the approach of the construction's thirtieth anniversary. Roth draws attention to the Reichstag as an architectural display of German nationalism and power, registering the contradiction between the inscription on the structure, according to which it serves 'Dem deutschen Volke', and the bombastic dimension of the crown of its cupola:

¹²⁹ Joseph Roth, 'Der Herr Offizier', in Roth, *Werke*, vol. 1, pp. 836–837 (p. 836). See also 'Der Herr mit dem Monokel', in Roth, *Werke*, vol. 2, pp. 131–133.

¹³⁰ Joseph Roth, 'Kaiserbilder', in Roth, *Werke*, vol. 1, pp. 842–843 (p. 843).

¹³¹ See Roth, 'Berliner Bilderbuch', p. 123.

¹³² More detail will be given in Chapter 5.

Auf seiner Kuppel, fünfundsiebzig Meter über dem Staßenniveau, erhebt sich die goldene Krone, breit, wuchtend, eine Last, die in keinem Verhältnis zur Kuppel steht und jenen Widmungsspruch desavouiert.¹³³

Roth recounts how elected representatives of the people never entered the Reichstag through the grand front entrance but instead were admitted through an unremarkable and 'schmale Pforte in der Simonstraße'.¹³⁴ Despite the Reichstag's supposed advancement to an icon of democracy, Roth describes it as 'unendlich schwer hier *kein* Symbol aus der Zeit Kaiser Wilhelms II. zu sehen. Vier deutsche Kaisergestalten aus Bronze stehen im Vorraum'.¹³⁵ The building's interior elicits a similar sensation of its being a 'Tote Pracht',¹³⁶ forever held in awe. Helen Chambers observes how Roth's article 'links ceremonial and architectural forms to mentality formation'.¹³⁷ In Roth's view, the building signifies an obvious expression of affinity with the past order, and the politicians' ignominious access route was an expression of disrespect for the democratic age of which they were representatives. Dieter Mayer suggests that Roth's interest is above all in exposing the Reichstag as 'ein markantes Symbol der Erkrankung des Staatskörpers'.¹³⁸ Thus, similar to the way in which social ills are manifest in Roth's representation of spaces of poverty, the ailing body politic also finds expression in the spatial form of the Reichstag.

One of the more literal ways in which politics is articulated in spatial terms, and space indeed *becomes* political, is the advertising by political parties in urban spaces. Roth portrays how the *Deutsche Volkspartei*, representing anti-republican, right-wing views,¹³⁹ campaigned during the 1924 parliamentary elections:

Mit der blendenden Waffe der Lichtreklame. In der Tauentzienstraße, die bekanntlich ein vornehmer Strich ist, leuchtet über einem Dach die Inschrift auf: "Die deutsche Kraft! Kölnisches Wasser!" Darunter: "Sprengt die Ketten! Wählt Deutsche Volkspartei!"¹⁴⁰

¹³³ Joseph Roth, 'Ein Unpolitischer geht in den Reichstag', in Roth, *Werke*, vol. 2, pp. 191–194 (p. 191).

¹³⁴ Roth, 'Ein Unpolitischer', p. 191.

¹³⁵ Ibid.

¹³⁶ Ibid.

¹³⁷ Chambers, 'Sign of the Times', p. 117.

¹³⁸ Meyer, p. 270

¹³⁹ Stibbe, p. 79.

¹⁴⁰ Roth, 'Bilderbuch', p. 105.

Roth ponders – tongue in cheek – the party’s decision to buy advertising space on a rooftop alongside a commercial for cologne. The answer eludes him but he speculates that ‘die Lage des Hauses gerade in der Tauentzienstraße ja eine Reklame beider Artikel außerordentlich fördern muß’.¹⁴¹ Roth thus suggests both the impact of commercial advertisements in public spaces – with their lurid visual codes –, and the link between the geographic location of the wealthy Tauentzienstraße and the chances of success by the *Deutsche Volkspartei*. The use of electric light as a ‘weapon’ plays on the allure and overpowering nature of illuminations in the 1920s. It also suggests the metaphorical power of light – signalling modernity, transparency, and novelty –, even though the political views being publicised are anything but modern or novel.

The spatial relation between western districts in Berlin and backward political movement is further discernible in the article ‘Parade eines Gespenstes’, also written in 1924. Here the image of a nation fallen sick (‘Erkrankung des Staatskörpers’) is articulated in rather more apparent ways. Roth outlines how a spectral figure marches ‘in der geräuschvoll lebendigen Hauptstraße’¹⁴² in West Berlin, adorned with ‘einen Helm aus massivem Metall, an dessen Vorderseite ein königlicher Wappenadler die Schwingen ausbreitete wie auf dem Schild eines Finanzamtes’.¹⁴³ The *Gespenst* wears boots ‘die aus schwarzem Spiegelglas hergestellt schienen’,¹⁴⁴ whilst ‘ein langes Eisenstück’¹⁴⁵ hangs on its left side. Despite its ‘real’ setting in the Hauptstraße, the article alludes to the ‘unreality’ of the situation and the anachronism of a marching, uniformed person within the context of the modern age, here illustrated using an inventory of metropolitan phenomena:

Woher kam dieser Geist mitten in die Welt der Elektrizität, der Radiowellen, der Mikrophone, des Asphalts, der Arbeit, der Warenhäuser, der Fabriksirenen, der Autoreifen der Zeitungsverkäufer, der Telegraphenboten, der Dienstmänner, der Motorräder?¹⁴⁶

Listing these emblems of modernity and urban culture has the effect of reinforcing the break with pre-war mentalities and lifestyles; it signals the

¹⁴¹ Roth, ‘Bilderbuch’, p. 106.

¹⁴² Joseph Roth, ‘Parade eines Gespenstes’, in Roth, *Werke*, vol. 2, pp. 171–173, p. 171.

¹⁴³ Roth, ‘Parade’, p. 171.

¹⁴⁴ Roth, ‘Parade’, p. 172.

¹⁴⁵ Roth, ‘Parade’, p. 172.

separation of the past age from the present and, by most accounts, progressive society. Roth employs the same technique of contrasting aspects of urban life (traffic, streets, advertising) with an arresting – because incongruous – image in his depiction of homeless people on the move in Berlin in ‘Zug der Fünftausend’. Both articles call attention to politicised urban space: in the latter instance, homeless people can be understood as the materialisation of political failings, while the Hauptstraße becomes a political space through the appearance of the military figure, the ‘Gespenst’, which to Roth personifies the rotten former order, its lingering stench of ‘Leichenaroma’¹⁴⁷ and ‘Stickgas’¹⁴⁸ suggestive of imperial mentalities not yet vanquished.

The close interrelation between space and reactionary politics continues in a series of eighteen *feuilleton* articles published under the rubric ‘Berliner Bilderbuch’. These appeared between the months of March and July 1924 in the satirical magazine *Der Drache*, and reported on several weeks’ worth of everyday events taking place in Berlin against the backdrop of continued hyperinflation. Roth’s ‘Bilderbuch’ includes deliberate contrasts between poverty and material abundance in Berlin, between hunger and consumerist waste; he addresses social issues such as prostitution and police abuse of power.¹⁴⁹ Above all, however, Roth’s articles are prognostic, and bring to the fore how xenophobia, anti-Semitism and reactionary violence were being openly expressed on the streets of West Berlin. The ‘Bilderbuch’ opens, for example, with a description of an Indian woman ‘die vor einigen Tagen, in den Vormittagsstunden, über den Prager Platz zu ihrem Musiklehrer eilte und von einem einheimischen Betrunkenen angefallen wurde’.¹⁵⁰ Witnesses of the physical assault apparently did nothing to intervene and Roth writes that she barely missed being killed at the hands of ‘völkischer und alkoholischer Vaterlandsliebe’.¹⁵¹ He reveals how Jewish-owned newspapers buried the news and refused to condemn the violence, fearing readers’ reactions. The Indian press agency, Roth says, would surely be surprised ‘wie gering die Entrüstung

¹⁴⁶ Roth, ‘Parade’, p. 173.

¹⁴⁷ Ibid.

¹⁴⁸ Ibid.

¹⁴⁹ See also Primus-Heinz Kucher, “Warenhäuser, Rummelplätze, Walkürenjungfrauen”. Zu Joseph Roths *Berliner Bilderbuch*-Feuilletons (1924), in Lughofer and Zalaznik, *Joseph Roth*, pp. 221–229.

¹⁵⁰ Roth, ‘Bilderbuch’, p. 92.

der demokratischen Kulturjuden Berlins sein kann, wenn es die Furcht vor einem auch nur zuschriftlichen Pogrom erheischt'.¹⁵² The influence of anti-Semitism on the city's liberal Jewish press seems to Roth symptomatic of a menacing political movement on the rise.

Roth's reports here are dominated by descriptions of 'völkisch'¹⁵³ individuals – students and schoolboys – of a distinctly anti-urban mindset and apparently determined to restore a homogeneous national community in Germany, with emphasis on racial politics. Roth records how groups of 'Völkische' stride 'durch die westlichen Straßen Berlins',¹⁵⁴ bellowing anti-Semitic chants ('Jude! Jude!'),¹⁵⁵ and sabotage for financial reward election meetings held by Republican supporters. Roth remarks how: 'Ein Polizist ließ sie ruhig marschieren, Passanten wichen ihnen aus'.¹⁵⁶ The assumed protective powers of law and order, as evoked by Roth, appear unreliable, with Berlin seemingly under guard by a police force that has its own dubious code of behaviour.

Roth goes into greater detail of the type of right-wing student being 'bred' in Germany in 'Der Korpsstudent' (1924), an article that also conveys Roth's disillusionment with the morally ambiguous situation in Germany, where large numbers of the old guard presided over legal institutions and the education system. To Roth, the *Korpsstudent* represented the continuation of a patriotic, racist ideology; beliefs nurtured by academic institutions that, not having been subject to reform after the war, were a platform for conservative lecturers, free to resume their teaching of traditionalist, anti-republican dogma. The *Korpsstudent* was thus synonymous with a backward mentality, and Roth summons visions of cadaverous figures who, like the parading *Gespenst*, feed off past glories in order to sustain themselves in the present: 'Vom Moder des Gewesenen und Verwesenden lebt er'.¹⁵⁷

In one of the concluding articles of his 'Bilderbuch' series, Roth delivers a powerful critique of Berlin. In what amounts to a programmatic statement, he writes: 'Wenn ich mir vorgenommen hätte, edle, schöne und humane Ereignisse

¹⁵¹ Roth, 'Bilderbuch', p. 92.

¹⁵² Roth, 'Bilderbuch', p. 93.

¹⁵³ Roth, 'Bilderbuch', p. 104.

¹⁵⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵⁵ Ibid.

¹⁵⁶ Roth, 'Bilderbuch', p. 104.

¹⁵⁷ Joseph Roth, 'Der Korpsstudent', in Roth, *Werke*, vol. 2, pp. 63–64 (p. 64).

aus Berlin zu berichten – ich stünde jede Woche vor einer kleinen Katastrophe, denn mir mangelt das Material'.¹⁵⁸ Roth's 'Bilderbuch' *feuilletons* take stock of the prevalent political atmosphere in the capital, and ultimately interpret the conditions as 'Symptome des nationalen Verfalles'.¹⁵⁹ Roth adopts what Chambers describes as a 'diagnostic approach'¹⁶⁰ to Berlin, a practice already in evidence in early articles about postwar life in Vienna, published in 1919 under the category 'Wiener Symptome'. Roth's observation of Vienna as 'an ailing city'¹⁶¹ was, according to Chambers, 'carried over into later pieces where the patient was the Weimar Republic and the diseases incurable'.¹⁶²

Roth maps the socio-political times and atmosphere by rendering real topographical features that are outward displays of anti-democratic, nationalistic feeling. He also relates how growing extremism is expressed through spatial practices (advertising, marching, sabotage) in specific locations in western parts of Berlin. Roth significantly points up how political views have a concrete setting, thereby revealing what Schlögel terms the 'räumliche Seite der geschichtlichen Welt'.¹⁶³

3.6 Conclusion

Joseph Roth's Berlin *feuilletons* notably offer a counter-representation to the conventional images propagated of the city during the Weimar era (as outlined in Chapter 2). Other than his reflections on symbols of political power in Berlin, and the railway intersection at Gleisdreieck, Roth's articles remain altogether distant from the city's historic contemporary highlights and landmarks. Instead there is a concentration on human conditions in the city. His perception of Berlin is that of an entity afflicted by socio-economic and political problems, which manifest themselves in its urban population and the body politic. As has been discussed above, Roth portrays 'die anonyme Seite der Großstadt'¹⁶⁴ in a conscious effort to call attention to socially and economically peripheral groups

¹⁵⁸ Roth, 'Bilderbuch', p. 126.

¹⁵⁹ Ibid.

¹⁶⁰ Chambers, 'Signs of the Times', in Leydecker (ed.), *German Novelists of the Weimar Republic*, p. 103.

¹⁶¹ Chambers, 'Signs of the Times', p. 103.

¹⁶² Ibid.

¹⁶³ Schlögel, p. 68.

¹⁶⁴ Roth, 'Die Toten', p. 914.

and outsiders who are denied protection against the more brutal aspects of interwar Berlin. He also shines a light on the western districts of the city and depicts them as being abundant with forces of the old order and supporters of an anti-republican ideology.

Significantly, a spatial reading of Roth's Berlin *feuilleton* articles reveals how, collectively, these constitute a form of spatio-social mapping: Roth links specific spaces in Berlin with social and political conditions, effectively presenting us with what Andrew Piper in another context terms 'the space of time'.¹⁶⁵ In other words, Roth narrates temporality by means of spatial forms in Berlin. He foregrounds concrete spaces and topographies, and maps spatial movements – both the physical (im)mobility of the poor and the Jews, as well as 'movement' in terms of political activity. In so doing, Roth articulates, and enhances our current understanding of, some of the concerns dominating the era: material deprivation, societal disorder, and political instability and violence.

¹⁶⁵ Andrew Piper, 'Mapping Vision: Goethe, Cartography, and the Novel', in Fisher and Mennel (eds), *Spatial Turns*, pp. 27–51 (p. 37).

CHAPTER FOUR

PERSONAL TOPOGRAPHIES IN GABRIELE TERGIT'S FEUILLETONS

Gabriele Tergit was one of the more prominent female journalists (alongside Erika Mann, Maria Leitner, Helen Grund, Annemarie Schwarzenbach, and Polly Tieck) to contribute to the *feuilleton* in Berlin's metropolitan broadsheets and journals published during the Weimar Republic. A native of the city, Tergit wrote almost exclusively about Berlin in the time she lived there, her journalistic oeuvre encompassing *feuilletons*, reportage, commentaries, travel reports, portraits of 'Berliner Typen',¹ and court writings. Though research has paid attention to a number of issues in Tergit's oeuvre, her *feuilleton* articles that detail ordinary life in 1920s Berlin, and in particular her depictions of the city's urban environment, remain largely unexplored. This chapter, divided into four sections, investigates Tergit's identity as a local inhabitant of Berlin and its effect on her mapping of the city. Here, we can see how she "writes" Berlin and its spaces through the depiction of movement, mobility, and shifting perspectives. Further central aspects that mark Tergit's *feuilleton* articles are the division of Berlin's physical environment, and depictions of defined urban spaces in the city.

4.1 Introduction

'Es ist gar nicht so leicht, über Berlin zu schreiben, und die besten Leute haben sich schon die Zähne daran ausgebissen. Vielleicht nur im Film möglich'.²

Such are the words spoken by Willi Frächter in Gabriele Tergit's novel *Käsebier erobert den Kurfürstendamm*, published in 1931. What might be termed a meta-

¹ Jens Brüning, 'Nachwort', in Brüning (ed.), *Gabriele Tergit. Atem einer anderen Welt*, pp. 195–206 (p. 196).

² Tergit, *Käsebier erobert den Kurfürstendamm*, p. 45. The concept of 'filmisches Schreiben' or 'filmisches Erzählen' was widespread in literature at the time. Authors – including Gabriele Tergit, Irmgard Keun and Erich Kästner – adopted "filmic" practices in their writing to convey a sense of realism, including cross-fades or cross-cuts (the rapid shift between scenes), panning in and out, montage, and providing a bird's eye view. See Carsten Lange, 'Magischer Realismus, Impressionismus und filmisches Erzählen in Friedo Lampes *Im Rande der Nacht*', in Sabine Kyora and Stefan Neuhaus (eds), *Realistisches Schreiben in der Weimarer Republik* (Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann, 2006), pp. 287–301.

commentary on her own profession as a *feuilleton* writer in Berlin is, in the novel, an exchange between writer and opportunist Frächter, and the acclaimed dramatist, Otto Lambeck. The latter has been asked by the publisher of a large daily newspaper to compose a series of articles about Berlin. Frächter subsequently tells him of the difficulties in composing literary portraits of the city.

Gabriele Tergit's own writings about Berlin take the form of *feuilleton* articles, court reports and her novel *Käsebier*. Born Elise Hirschmann in the same year as Joseph Roth (1894), Tergit was also of Jewish provenance, and she wrote for numerous prestigious newspapers and journals – including the *Berliner Tageblatt*, *Vossische Zeitung*, and *Berliner Börsen Courier* – whilst still completing her studies. She was subsequently offered full employment as a court reporter by the *Berliner Tageblatt* between 1925 and 1933: her brief was to issue nine accounts per month from the criminal courts in the district of Moabit, in addition to writing *feuilleton* articles. From 1928, Tergit also contributed to the satirical journal *Die Weltbühne*, then under the editorship of Carl von Ossietzky. Tergit's oeuvre includes both journalism and novels, though she owed her renown as a journalist in the 1920s and early 1930s first and foremost to her court reports. These 'Gerichtsquatschereien', as she herself called them, avoided legal jargon and told in lucid language the routine workings of the legal process, shining a light on the mood and atmosphere in Berlin during the Weimar period. Themes of personal interest to Tergit included the role of women both as victims and as aggressors in society, their social position on a larger scale, and their treatment by the law. Helen Chambers points to Tergit's overriding concern about the 'criminalisation of women'³ in society, and about how the courtrooms of Moabit were themselves predominantly a masculine environment, in which the only female presence was provided by the women watching the court proceedings from the gallery, and by the 'Reinemachefrau, [...], die unter der Perspektive des Staubes die Welt betrachtet'.⁴ Tergit's observations of gender issues include a considerable

³ Helen Chambers, "Eine ganze Welt baut sich im Gerichtssaal auf", in Warren and Zitzlsperger (eds), *Vienna meets Berlin*, p. 104.

⁴ Gabriele Tergit, 'Frauen im Gerichtsgebäude', in Jens Brüning (ed.), *Gabriele Tergit. Blüten der Zwanziger Jahre. Gerichtsreportagen und Feuilletons 1923-1933* (Berlin: Rotation, 1984), p. 64–65 (p. 65).

number of articles that examine individual fates of women affected by the Republic's abortion laws. She writes with empathy of the consequences of unwanted pregnancies (with infanticide a common phenomenon)⁵ and failed abortions, resulting in women's deaths.⁶ Tergit's court writings demonstrate social awareness and reveal the motives behind poor decision-making by those on trial. She highlights the human element – and suffering – involved in such cases, not least owing to the severe sentencing of women whose crimes owe more to ignorance and naiveté than malicious intent. Like Roth, Tergit's court writing avoids explicit political opinion, but she does not shy away from highlighting what she perceived to be the legal injustices inflicted upon the vulnerable, those who lacked 'the mental and linguistic capacity'⁷ to defend themselves before the law. However, while Roth's concern for social issues led him to explore further the backgrounds of the victims caught up in the legal system in his writings – specifically their living quarters and environment, Tergit does not examine the fates of society's underprivileged out of the context of her court writings. As these constitute the greater part of her works, she may have regarded her court reports as the arena in which to address political and social conditions.

Further matters of interest to Tergit include the abuse of power by the authorities in the Weimar Republic, and the regular brutality carried out in the streets of Berlin by National Socialists. Tergit's court reports provide an impression of the political bias of a legal system still largely led by judges from the pre-democratic era who were nationalistically minded. Roth wrote frequently about the anti-Semitic, racist, or political extremism he witnessed in Berlin, and Tergit documented the consequences in court, and what kind of penalty was issued to the respective parties.⁸ She – and other court reporters, including

⁵ See Gabriele Tergit, 'Gretchen-Tragödie', in Tergit, *Blüten*, pp. 201–203; 'Kindesmord', in Tergit, *Blüten*, pp. 203–204; 'Eine Postkarte und zwei Analphabeten', in Tergit, *Blüten*, pp. 206–207.

⁶ See Gabriele Tergit, 'Paragraph 218... Abtreibungsprozess ohne Frauen', in Jens Brüning (ed.), *Gabriele Tergit. Wer schießt aus Liebe? Gerichtsreportagen* (Berlin: Das Neue Berlin, 1999), pp. 141–142.

⁷ Chambers, "'Eine ganze Welt baut sich im Gerichtssaal auf'", p. 103.

⁸ Though nowhere near as prolific in terms of court writing, Roth did, however, contribute to the culture of trial reporting, a genre which gained in literary stature in the 1920s.

Roth – took a keen interest in, and drew attention to, those who had been neglected by society.

In 1931 Tergit gained recognition for *Käsebier erobert den Kurfürstendamm*, a publication whose actions are set in Berlin's press and publishing industry, and provides insight into 'die Veränderung des sozialen und politischen Klimas am Ende der Weimarer Republik'.⁹ The novel is constructed around the story of Georg Käsebier, a hapless and entirely average folk singer from the working class area of Hasenheide in Neukölln, whose rapid rise to fame and equally sharp descent into ignominy is the result of excessive promotion by the media. Tergit described her work as a 'Satire auf den Betrieb'.¹⁰ Her criticism is directed at the loss of integrity within the journalism industry in the era of rationalisation and economic depression. In the words of Erhard Schütz, she highlights the contemporary 'Mentalität der Reklame, des Bluffs, von Schein und Sein, von Superlativen statt Substanz, es geht um Marketing und Merchandising, nicht um Produktqualität'.¹¹ Tergit maintained that her journalistic work had motivated her to write *Käsebier*, and she was candid about having adapted ideas from her *feuilleton* articles to her prose-work, or even having included more than thirty of her journalistic writings *verbatim* in her novel, from snatches of dialogue and sketches of social milieus, to street descriptions of Berlin. The seamless incorporation of her writings for newspapers in her novel points towards Tergit's taking an identical approach to both journalism and prose. In terms of themes and style, it is this blurring of the genres which highlights the value Tergit perceived her journalism to possess.

Fiona Sutton remarks that 'it was only in the wake of renewed public and academic interest in the Weimar era during the 1970s that Tergit's work saw a revival in popularity'.¹² Since then, the journalist Jens Brüning has edited

⁹ Inge Stephan, 'Stadt Ohne Mythos. Gabriele Tergits Berlin-Roman "Käsebier erobert den Kurfürstendamm"', in Sabina Becker and Christoph Weiß (eds), *Neue Sachlichkeit im Roman. Neue Interpretationen zum Roman der Weimarer Republik* (Stuttgart and Weimar: Metzler, 1995), pp. 291–313 (p. 296).

¹⁰ Jens Brüning, 'Nachwort', in Tergit, *Käsebier erobert den Kurfürstendamm*, pp. 263–269 (p. 263).

¹¹ Erhard Schütz, 'Von Fräulein Larissa zu Fräulein Dr. Kohler? Zum Status von Reporterinnen in der Weimarer Republik – das Beispiel Gabriele Tergit', in Walter Fähnders and Helga Karrenbock (eds), *Autorinnen der Weimarer Republik* (Bielefeld: Aisthesis, 2003), pp. 215–237 (p. 234).

¹² Fiona Sutton, 'Weimar's Forgotten Cassandra: The Writings of Gabriele Tergit in the Weimar Republic', in Karl Leydecker (ed.), *German Novelists of the Weimar Republic. Intersections*

Tergit's journalism, and scholars have examined Tergit's court reports,¹³ her publishing success *Käsebier*,¹⁴ and her contribution to the development of new forms of literary expression among female authors after 1920.¹⁵ Academic literature has, however, been slow to study what Schütz terms Tergit's 'feuilletonistische Stadstreifzüge':¹⁶ her literary explorations of Berlin's urban environment. These articles are noteworthy for the centrality of physical space to her presentation of the modern city – real spaces and orientation points, references to areas readers were familiar with. They are, however, significantly fewer in number than her court writings and thus perhaps not subject to comparative scrutiny.¹⁷ The exceptions are Christina Ujma's article 'Gabriele Tergit and Berlin: Women, City and Modernity', which refers to Tergit's Berlin texts and defines them as 'very urban, very interested in the visual, in the city and in city dwellers',¹⁸ and Martin Herold's brief analysis of Tergit's perambulations of Berlin as part of his wider investigation of the link between *flânerie* and geography in the Weimar *feuilleton*.¹⁹ The following investigation seeks to revise the relative neglect of Tergit's journalistic works by exploring her oeuvre from 1920 to 1930, which yields articles detailing metropolitan Berlin and its milieus. The chapter will foreground the spatial dimension of the articles 'Eingewöhnen in Berlin' (1927), 'Liebeserklärung an diese Stadt' (1927), 'Vorfrühlingsreise nach Berlin',²⁰ and 'Heimat 75 resp. 78', among others, in

of Literature & Politics (New York and Suffolk: Camden House, 2006), pp. 193–209 (p. 195).

¹³ See Chambers, "Eine ganze Welt baut sich im Gerichtssaal auf", and Sutton, 'Weimar's Forgotten Cassandra'.

¹⁴ See Eva-Maria Mockel, *Aspekte von Macht und Ohnmacht im literarischen Werk Gabriele Tergits* (Aachen: Shaker, 1996); Liane Schüller, *Vom Ernst der Zerstreuung. Schreibende Frauen am Ende der Weimarer Republik: Marieluise Fleißer, Irmgard Keun und Gabriele Tergit* (Bielefeld: Aisthesis, 2005).

¹⁵ Sabina Becker, " ... zu den Problemen der Realität zugelassen". Autorinnen der Neuen Sachlichkeit', in Walter Fähnders and Helga Karrenbock (eds), *Autorinnen der Weimarer Republik* (Bielefeld: Aisthesis, 2003), pp. 187–213.

¹⁶ Schütz, 'Von Fräulein Larissa zu Fräulein Dr. Kohler?', in Fähnders and Karrenbock (eds), *Autorinnen der Weimarer Republik*, p. 229.

¹⁷ Even Inge Stephan, who examines Berlin as the setting for Tergit's *Käsebier erobert den Kurfürstendamm*, only provides limited detail on the spatial aspects of the novel.

¹⁸ Christina Ujma, 'Gabriele Tergit and Berlin: Women, City and Modernity', in Christiane Schönfeld and Carmel Finnan (eds), *Practicing Modernity: Female Creativity in the Weimar Republic* (Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann, 2006), pp. 262–277 (p. 264).

¹⁹ Martin Herold, *Der Geograph im Flaneur. Berlin im Feuilleton der Weimarer Republik* (Berlin: Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin, 2007), pp. 56–58.

²⁰ The precise date and place of publication for 'Vorfrühlingsreise nach Berlin' and 'Heimat 75 resp. 78' is not stated in Brüning's *Atem einer anderen Welt*, but he lists them as having been published between 1920 and 1930.

order to determine how Tergit maps the city, and how her experience of the urban is articulated in explicitly spatial terms.

4.2 Tergit and Berlin: Identity matters

Tergit spent her formative years in a relatively affluent household north of Jannowitzbrücke in East Berlin, a modest environment that enabled her to gain – if not at first hand – ‘profunde Kenntnisse über das Hinterhofelend’²¹ in Berlin. Later, as her family’s fortunes grew, she relocated to the district of Tiergarten in West Berlin, an area Tergit remained in until she fled Germany in 1933. Tergit’s familiarity with Berlin and its urban environment is one of the defining characteristics of her “roaming” reports. The outsider’s view that emanates strongly from Joseph Roth’s *feuilleton* articles, with recurring themes of rootlessness and unstable existences in the city, is entirely absent from Tergit’s, whose writings project a sense of her being resolutely grounded in Berlin (unlike Roth and Tucholsky, Tergit does not compare Berlin with other cities). She orientates herself easily, moving through the city’s terrain with an awareness that is not so much the result of studying maps, plans and timetables (as the outsider might), but rather of having assimilated the knowledge through regular explorations of the city she lives in. However, her identity is on occasion also seemingly that of a traveller to Berlin, with Tergit adopting the ‘touristic’ perception and expectation of the city in approach. At the same time, she appears to take the reader (or outsider) by the hand and ‘introduces’ them to Berlin, adopting the familiar ‘du’ to direct the reader’s eye or help their orientation:

Rechts katholische Kirche und alter Kastanienbaum, erkennbar auch ohne Blütenkerzen, sonst ist ja, abgesehn von den Linden im Juni, die am Geruch zu erkennen sind, Baum Baum in Berlin. Du biegst nun in den Handel ab [...].²²

The somewhat blasé reference to the interchangeableness of trees in Berlin quoted above marks Tergit unequivocally as an urban resident, alert to every nuance in the city, and her texts demonstrate a highly subjective understanding

²¹ Mockel, p. 34.

²² Tergit, ‘Vorfrühlingsreise nach Berlin’, in Tergit, *Atem*, pp. 17–21 (p. 19).

of Berlin. A notable feature of Tergit's articles is in fact her gaze, which takes in her own familiar milieu, meaning her impressions and references are correspondingly well-informed. Tergit more often than not provides a first-person perspective or narration of events, unlike Joseph Roth, who makes rare use of the first-person pronoun.

Most characteristic of Tergit's urban know-how is her article, 'Heimat 75 resp. 78', in which she writes appreciatively of Berlin's trams, underground and suburban trains, and, to a lesser extent, its buses. Tergit commits to page in comprehensive detail their respective paths through the city (west to east, south to north), and public transport methods are referred to by number only, signifying a level of familiarity gained from frequent travel.²³ It is probably safe to say that Tergit does not write in the role of the commuter, who, as Rachel Bowlby states, 'goes about his journeys and his business in a determined way; [...] does not smell or feel the city as a source of wonder or stimulation, but only as a means to an end [...]'.²⁴ On the contrary, Tergit's articles transmit a sense of marvel, and her trajectories through the city are of personal significance. Modes of transport and Tergit's sense of individuality are interrelated, as she associates particular trams and their routes with specific moments in her personal history:

Später fuhr ich mit der S. und O. zur Universität. War es nicht schön, durch den Tiergarten zu fahren? Ewig die gleichen Geschäfte in der Dorotheenstraße, Geflügelhandlung, Schropps Landkarten [...].²⁵

Tergit invites readers to share in her reminiscences of the journey undertaken on a regular basis, offering unchanging street scenes in central Berlin's Dorotheenstraße; her train compartment forms a type of ritualised space in which certain routines take place. Moments later, Tergit declares her mode of transport as crucial to her sense of orientation and mobility in Berlin:

Wenn man in ein neue Wohnung zieht, überlegt man, was nun unsere neue Heimat wäre, nicht der Gang durch die neue Straße,

²³ Annett Gröschner embarked on a similar enterprise more than eighty years later, travelling on Berlin's trams and buses, and produced a collection of portraits of the city and its citizens, in *Hier beginnt die Zukunft, hier steigen wir aus. Unterwegs in der Berliner Verkehrsgesellschaft* (Berlin: Berlin Verlag, 2002).

²⁴ Rachel Bowlby, 'Commuting', in Matthew Beaumont and Gregory Dart (eds), *Restless Cities* (London: Verso, 2010), pp. 43–57 (p. 49).

²⁵ Gabriele Tergit, 'Heimat 75 resp. 78', in Tergit, *Atem*, pp. 24–27 (p. 24).

nicht der Name des nächsten Schlächters, der Laden des Grünkramhändlers, [...], sondern wie das Tier heißt, das uns über die täglichen Berufswege führt.²⁶

Tergit borrows the metaphor of the animal to inject life into machines. The affectionate characterisation of the tram and train as a 'Tier' reflects not only her relation to the city as someone familiar with (and fond of) its workings, but also indicates that Tergit did not view the mechanised transport system as threatening; instead she has an emotional attachment to her modes of travel. It is worth noting how her portrayal of the city's trams in particular counteracts Joseph Roth's projected view of them as a source of much bewilderment. Tergit, in comparison, considers her 'Gute 75, edelwerte, wohlgefällige 75'.²⁷ At the same time, the analogy between animal and machine conveys the mechanical pace of transport, and the crawling, creeping, snaking and bending actions of the trams and trains through the city.²⁸ However, Tergit is less fond of the buses, which are depicted as overcrowded, have a habit of speeding off, or arriving late, and are too unpredictable to be relied on, which justifies the insult 'gemeines Biest'.²⁹ This approach, as well as the specificity of her transport journeys, is likely to have resonated with readers of the 'Berlin-Seite', the local page of the Berliner Tageblatt for which Tergit wrote. The journey across the city was a shared experience, and her account presumably reflects others' encounters with Berlin by public transportation (though Tergit's feelings about transport in the city are the antithesis of Roth's and Tucholsky's. See Chapter 5.5). Her method also suggests a sense of appropriation on her behalf of her modes of travel; it solidifies her identification and affinity with the city, a sentiment that contrasts with Roth's detachment and mood of resignation. Crucially, it is the personal pathways that make Berlin Tergit's 'own' city and represent the difference between being at home (Tergit) and being transitional (Roth).

²⁶ Tergit, 'Heimat', p. 25.

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ See also the analogy between transportation methods in Berlin and animals by another Berlin native, Georg Hermann, in his 1910 novel *Kubinke*: 'Dort gleiten und huschen die hellen Hochbahnzüge wie leuchtende Glasschlangen in ihre schwarzen Löcher hinab'. Georg Hermann, *Kubinke* (Berlin: Das Neue Berlin, 1997), p. 14.

²⁹ Tergit, 'Heimat', p. 26.

The interplay between Tergit's identity and the city also comes into focus in the distinctly non-urban article, 'Das Abenteuer in K...titz' (1922).³⁰ Stranded for a day and a night in the small town of 'K...titz' outside of Berlin owing to a broken down train, Tergit writes of her endeavours to make time pass. The town is termed a rail hub that fails to attract much else apart from through-traffic. Beyond the railway station Tergit finds herself surprised at discovering 'daß die Häuser des Eisenbahnknotenpunktes keine Attrappe für D-Zugreisende sind, wie Berliner gern annehmen, sondern daß K...titz wirklich existiert'.³¹ Her comment suggests a whiff of condescension typically felt by urban citizens towards provincial towns.

Finding no solace in the town's physical attractions – it lacks landmarks or celebrated features, and the houses are 'sehr häßlich'³² – Tergit shops for unnecessary objects, has her hair washed twice, and views a film twice over in a cinema. At lunchtime Tergit settles in a café and draws suspicious glances from the locals, possibly because they have judged her to be a city-dweller. Watching men and women chat and dine in their finest attire, Tergit is drawn to them even though she feels decidedly out of place. 'Ich möchte mich zu ihnen setzen und auch von Dienstboten reden. Aber ich gehöre nicht dazu.'³³ The unhurried rural pace and lifestyle, and the unusual experience of being involuntarily marooned outside the city, points up by comparison the urbanity of Berlin, and its import as a space for opportunity and potential, which Tergit might hitherto have taken for granted. Her underwhelming "adventure" in the province – remote from her "normal" pathways – does much to confirm Tergit's urban identity and consciousness, her sense of "belonging" to the city, whose capacity for *real* escapades are consequently appreciated all the more.

Berlin as an essential component of her individuality is further evident in Tergit's *feuilleton* 'Ausflug in die Welt für 2 Mark' (1922). It recounts her viewing of a motion picture featuring protagonists who lead impossibly glamorous lifestyles, and whose dramas unfold in 'Hotelhallen, Bars und Luxuszügen'.³⁴ Inspired by the film and yearning to experience a similar sensation of glamour

³⁰ Gabriele Tergit, 'Das Abenteuer in K...titz', in Tergit, *Atem*, pp. 41–43.

³¹ Tergit, 'Abenteuer', p. 41.

³² Tergit, 'Abenteuer', p. 41.

³³ Tergit, 'Abenteuer', p. 42.

³⁴ Gabriele Tergit, 'Ausflug in die Welt für 2 Mark', in Tergit, *Blüten*, pp. 18–20 (p.18).

and luxury shown on the screen, Tergit leaves the cinema and makes her way towards Berlin's Bahnhof Zoo. Perhaps provoked by the film, she romanticises the concept of the train station:

Es kann gar kein Zweifel darüber bestehen, daß ein Bahnhof ein wundervoller Ort ist; schon diese Atmosphäre aus Schwefeldunst, Kußfreiheit und Geschäftigkeit hat etwas ungemein Belebendes: Schicksale enden hier und beginnen.³⁵

The station is portrayed as a space of drama, and Tergit's own yearning for adventure, or even a sense of *Fernweh*, induces her to purchase a ticket that will take her as far as Stendal, 'die erste Station nach Berlin für den Warschau-Paris-London-Express'.³⁶ The anticipation of thrill and exploration is, however, thwarted even as her train enters Zoo station. Everything about the train disappoints: from its physical appearance ('ein gräßliches Durcheinander. Belgische, französische und deutsche Wagen waren ohne System aneindandergekuppelt'),³⁷ to the passengers it carries. The train interior is noisy and filled with a well-dressed, international crowd. Men with:

interessante Köpfe und gute Anzüge [...] beherrschten sicherlich das Ecarté und Bakkarat in allen modernen Abarten bis zum Devisenspiel; die Frauen sahen schön aus, jung und rochen nach französischer Valuta.³⁸

This all leaves Tergit feeling rather ill at ease, and even somewhat inferior: 'Mir wurde höchst elend zumute, so vielen schwarzen Augen beiderlei Geschlechts fühlte ich mich durchaus nicht gewachsen. "Was soll man hier" dachte ich [...]'.³⁹ The cinematic experience of thrill-seeking and real life collide, and she disembarks before the train departs, leaving behind what she believed she desired: 'Und so nahm ich mein Billet nach Stendal, stieg wieder aus, verließ die internationale Welt und ging statt dessen in den zoologischen Garten, der ja nicht weit davon liegt'.⁴⁰ Tergit does not partake in the glamour of long-distance train travel; instead she seeks solace and familiarity in Berlin's zoo nearby, held dear by Berliners and whose animals perhaps present less of a threat or

³⁵ Tergit, 'Ausflug', p. 18.

³⁶ Tergit, 'Ausflug', p. 18, p. 19.

³⁷ Tergit, 'Ausflug', p. 19.

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ Tergit, 'Ausflug', p. 20.

disappointment to Tergit than her fellow humans. It is a moment of self-recognition, an admission to feeling out of her depth, and the antithesis of the metropolitan aura she transmits when in the provinces in 'Ausflug nach K...titz'. As for how her reaction reflects on Berlin, it is worth noting that the international world is not necessarily associated with the city – she buys a ticket to *leave* Berlin. At the same time, the city exerts its pull on Tergit: she does not manage to leave Berlin behind. The city is the opposite of what Roth in 1927 termed a 'Durchgangsstation',⁴¹ through which he hopes or expects to pass. Wolfgang Müller-Funk states about Roth's judgement of Berlin: 'Berlin, das ist für den heimatlosen Ost-Österreicher Roth [...] ein Ort, in dem nichts heimisch werden kann'.⁴² Tergit, however, is firmly rooted there.

One effect of this strong identification with Berlin is Tergit's perception and presentation of the city as a distinct character and one that in 'Liebeserklärung an diese Stadt' (1927) is gendered. The article is an impassioned paean to Berlin, describing a journey through space and time – from evening until morning, from west to northeast Berlin. Tergit is propelled through the night by the desire to experience the nocturnal pleasures the city has to offer ('Ist zwei Uhr eine Zeit zum Schlafengehen, wenn man eine Nacht durch Berlin treiben will? Nein, also weiter').⁴³ She visits both unfashionable and more risqué bars; spends time in a café and a tavern, before ending her night 'in einem Keller im Norden'.⁴⁴

The article opens with Tergit's direct salute to the city in breathless tones reminiscent of a love letter:

Hochverehrte, sehr geliebte Stadt. Gnädigste, wir wissen alle, daß Ihnen der Morgen steht, der Sommermorgen über den Parks, wenn gefegt wird und der Bimmelbolle Milch ausfährt durch die schlafende Stadt. Wir wissen alle, daß Ihnen der Mittag steht: Fluten der Autos, die Linden entlang aus der City, helle, lachende Herbstsonne über der Leipziger Straße [...]; liebste, gefällige Frau, nichts steht Ihnen aber dennoch so gut wie der Abend. Sie sind eine Nachtschönheit [...].⁴⁵

⁴¹ Joseph Roth, 'Juden auf Wanderschaft', p. 865.

⁴² Wolfgang Müller-Funk, *Joseph Roth* (Munich: C.H. Beck, 1989), p. 62.

⁴³ Tergit, 'Liebeserklärung', p. 30.

⁴⁴ Tergit, 'Liebeserklärung', p. 31.

⁴⁵ Tergit, 'Liebeserklärung', p. 28.

The city is considered female, and the act of assigning a gender to Berlin is rare and peculiar to Tergit. Few if any 1920s German authors do likewise (Kurt Tucholsky also addresses the city directly, but uses the informal 'du', and its gender remains ambiguous or neutral).⁴⁶ The city is also imbued with an assumed self-awareness, as Tergit repeatedly addresses it with the formal 'Sie'. She emphasises the city's individuality, in this article and others, through direct reference to a host of real spaces traversed in Berlin, making the city knowable and, moreover, locatable:

Durch den Wald blitzten die Lichter am Funkturm. In der Dunkelheit versanken Chaussee und Bäume und das Reklameschild voll Olex Strax und Shell und Minimax. Am Messegelände wirbelten ein paar Sekunden Inschriften und Hupen, Licht und Ton durcheinander. [...] Gegen elf Uhr fuhren wir weiter in die Stadt, über den Spittelmarkt hinaus. Gingen an der Friedrichsgracht entlang. Gegen den hellen Himmel steht der Stadthausturm, Schiffe liegen in der Spree.⁴⁷

A little further into the essay, Tergit's journey continues 'weg über aufgerissene Straßen, an Stichflammen vorbei, über Abgründe, Bauplätze hinweg nach der südlichen Friedrichstadt'.⁴⁸ As Tergit's journey across Berlin reaches its end, she concludes the article by heaping praise on the city, and expresses her unreserved gratitude:

Leben Sie wohl, liebste gefällige Frau Berlin. Und nehmen Sie Dank, daß wir hier leben dürfen, bewegt und bereit, heißen Herzens, aufgetanen Geistes, zu lächeln, zu schreiten und diese Luft zu atmen aus Freiheit, Frechheit und Benzin.⁴⁹

In this passage Tergit acknowledges Berlin as an enabling force, and not merely a passive and incidental backdrop to her adventures. It is in Tergit's eyes a place of unrestricted freedom, in addition to being integral to her existence: she avails herself of it, makes use of Berlin in the form of its cafés, bars and amusement venues, and its urban spaces. In return, Tergit gives thanks to Berlin for her experiences; she endows the city with an independent character that is linked in key ways with her own identity. Berlin is thus not an anonymous and utilitarian metropolis, but possesses a discernible, and,

⁴⁶ See Kurt Tucholsky, 'Auf Urlaub', in Tucholsky, *GW*, vol. 1, pp. 271–272 (p. 271).

⁴⁷ Tergit, 'Liebeserklärung', p. 29.

⁴⁸ Tergit, 'Liebeserklärung', p. 30.

⁴⁹ Tergit, 'Liebeserklärung', p. 31.

importantly, a benevolent presence. This impression is most likely linked with Tergit's local view, and stands out against the resentment with which Roth renders Berlin. His depictions convey an image of the city as possessing rather a *disabling* quality, and he thematises the experiences of isolation and anonymity inherent in metropolitan life. Berlin in Roth's writings becomes symbolic of a kind of social malaise overall after the First World War. By contrast, the impressions of the city that emanate from Tergit's topography-based articles cannot be read as metaphors for a general feeling of loss of a better past. Similarly, there is no evidence in her descriptions of journeys through Berlin that she regards the modern city as representative of *Verfall*, of the decline of society. Tergit certainly acknowledges social reality and the effects of post-war poverty on the inhabitants of Berlin's working class districts (Godela Weiss-Sussex points out that 'Eingewöhnen in Berlin' refers to the words on a 'zerfetztes Plakat'⁵⁰ on a wall in northern Berlin, which allude to unemployment, mass poverty, economic misery and political propaganda). The cartography she creates, however, only calls attention to, but does not offer detailed social analysis of, social inequality. Tergit does not have the same agenda as Joseph Roth, whose articles set out to explore and expose socio-political conditions in Berlin. Tergit 'knows the exact living conditions here, down to the prices of food and the likely income of the people she encounters'.⁵¹ It is urban territory she knows intimately and one might read into her reluctance to render it the refusal to emphasise the post-war hardship inscribed in the area's physical surroundings. At the same time, Tergit's approach to the representation of Berlin as a whole is related directly to her mode of viewing; to *how* and by what *means* she negotiates the city.

4.3 Writing Space: Movement, Mobility, and Perspective

Tergit navigates Berlin by various means of conveyance – the tram, train, bus, by car, and on foot. Godela Weiss-Sussex has investigated the extent to which Tergit's observations of Berlin in particular through the act of walking conform to

⁵⁰ Gabriele Tergit, 'Eingewöhnen in Berlin', in Tergit, *Atem*, pp. 13–17 (p. 15).

⁵¹ Godela Weiss-Sussex, "Ich gehe und gehe [...] Und gehe und sehe". Female Experience of the City', in Weiss-Sussex and Zitzlsperger (eds), *Berlin. Kultur und Metropole*, pp. 46–61 (p. 53).

a specifically 'female experience of the city'.⁵² Focusing on the character of Dr. Lotte Kohler, the woman protagonist (and journalist) of Tergit's novel *Käsebier erobert den Kurfürstendamm*, Weiss-Sussex concludes that her unaccompanied explorations of the city in a short chapter titled 'Ein Mädchen läuft durch die Stadt' appear to be a phenomenon taken for granted by Kohler. She is a well-educated, autonomous agent who embarks on solitary walks through Berlin's working-class districts, her freedom of movement notably not remarked upon by the author. As Weiss-Sussex points out, Tergit and Kohler are in fact one and the same observer, since the descriptions of Kohler's walk were originally written as part of Tergit's *feuilleton* articles 'Eingewöhnen in Berlin' and 'Vorfrühlingsreise nach Berlin'.⁵³

Weiss-Sussex describes Tergit's style as 'a distinctive voice that was already regarded by her contemporaries as typically female'.⁵⁴ She contrasts the 'personal, subjective involvement and social concern'⁵⁵ inherent in Kohler's observations of Berlin with those of the male character Otto Lambeck. His impressions appear less concerned with 'close observation or any personal involvement',⁵⁶ but remain rather superficial and self-serving (he is seeking material for a *feuilleton* article). However, the differences between male and female observations, and the 'voice' used to describe the city, do not necessarily translate into Tergit's possessing an unambiguous 'female city consciousness', as Deborah L. Parson terms it.⁵⁷ While Tergit, in her article 'Liebeserklärung an diese Stadt', does refer to Berlin as female, this perception of the city's gender should not be confused with Tergit's explorations of Berlin as a woman. Indeed, Tergit does not seem concerned with representing a gender-specific aesthetic perception of the city. A case in point is her adaptation of passages from 'Liebeserklärung an diese Stadt' to her novel *Käsebier*. The *feuilleton* depicts, from the first-person point of view (Tergit's own) a walk through nocturnal Berlin. She passes numerous sites and winds up in a cellar bar in the north of the city. In the novel, however, it is the male protagonist

⁵² Weiss-Sussex, 'Female Experience of the City', p. 54.

⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁷ See Deborah L. Parsons, *Streetwalking the Metropolis: Women, the City, and Modernity* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), p. 7.

Miermann who wanders the streets of Berlin, ending up in North Berlin at half past four in the morning.⁵⁸ Correspondingly, the closing words of 'Liebeserklärung', during which Tergit declares her appreciation of Berlin and its air (which, she says, smells of 'Freiheit, Frechheit und Benzin'),⁵⁹ re-appear in Käsebier but now refer to Otto Lambeck and *his* breathing of 'diese Luft aus Freiheit, Frechheit und Benzin'.⁶⁰ The gender of the person witnessing the street scenes appears irrelevant.

If the presentation of the city in Tergit's urban portraits is not the product of an unambiguously female gaze, might one conceive of her as a woman *flâneur*?⁶¹ Anke Gleber points out that 'it was only with the end of the nineteenth century that the – bourgeois – woman was permitted by society's conventions to walk its street freely'.⁶² Even then, however, the one acceptable urban territory to explore alone was the department store and these, as Gleber notes, 'have to be regarded, in view of the vast terrain of existing city spaces, as decidedly circumscribed and distinctly derivative'.⁶³ Tergit clearly defies the customs of the time: her contact with the city is neither mediated through the department store, nor does she fulfil the stereotype of the female consumer. Moreover, Tergit's urban texts are marked by a total absence of anxiety, and remarkably free from a sense of limitations in terms of her wanderings in Berlin. The only hints that her independence is not as straightforward as it appears are references in her article 'Liebeserklärung' to the plural 'wir' and 'uns': 'Es war halb fünf Uhr, fast schon Morgen, fast schon nicht mehr Nacht, als wir in einem Keller im Norden endeten'.⁶⁴ Her nighttime exploration is not undertaken unaccompanied, and the gender of her companion is most likely male since, at one point during the tour of the city's bars, Tergit notes: 'Böse Blicke fliegen mir

⁵⁸ To compare passages, see Gabriele Tergit, 'Liebeserklärung an diese Stadt', in Tergit, *Blüten*, pp. 28–31 (p. 30) and Tergit's *Käsebier erobert den Kurfürstendamm*, p. 217, p. 218.

⁵⁹ Tergit, 'Liebeserklärung', p. 30.

⁶⁰ Tergit, *Käsebier*, p. 43.

⁶¹ Anke Gleber argues that the 'possibility of a female *flânerie* would [...] seem to be absent from the cities of modernity' given the social conventions of public life in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Gleber notes that 'moving through public spaces emerges as a uniquely gendered practice, (almost) exclusively associated with male authors and protagonists'. See Gleber, p. 171.

⁶² Gleber, p. 174.

⁶³ Ibid.

⁶⁴ Tergit, 'Liebeserklärung', p. 31.

zu, der einzigen Frau im Lokal'.⁶⁵ This, however, does not necessarily refer to the fact that she is a woman out late at night, but rather to her presence in what appears to be a drag venue ('Eine bildschöne Blondine in schwarzer Paillette setzt sich an unsern [*sic*] Tisch. "Na, mein Süßer", quetscht sie – ein Er! – in dunklem Alt [...]').⁶⁶ At the same time, one might argue that Tergit's visualisation of the city – and her representational form – do not correspond to conventional concepts of the *flâneur* and his analytical, aesthetic interpretation of his environment. Her articles are narrated from a mobile street perspective (indeed, she conveys and seemingly relishes women's new freedom of movement), and Tergit observes and relays daily life in Berlin, but she does so casually, in the role of an informed insider, not an anonymous 'solitary stroller'⁶⁷ who seeks to 'read' and decode the urban realm.

Tergit's itinerant viewpoint has distinct implications for the depiction of Berlin's topography: her perceptions are fleeting, fluid, and rarely outlined in detail. Her rhythm differs considerably from Roth's more contemplative, unhurried pace; Tergit, on the other hand, is perpetually in motion. Moreover, she details a rich tableau of impressions gained from traversing Berlin, and sequences of spatial references characterise her articles. Tergit lists, for instance, in 'Heimat 75 resp. 78':

Tempelhof, wie gut, neues Land für junge Heime, für kleine Kinder, Belle-Alliance-Straße, alte Straßen, vornehmes preußisches Geheimrats-Berlin, Großbeerenstraße [...] und dann ist Norden. A.E.G. Studentengegend, Kliniken, medizinische Buchhandlungen, Theater, Kaserne, Karlstraße, Friedrichstraße, Landwirtschaftliche Hochschule, Invalidenstraße, Welt des Lernens, Welt des Forschens, Welt des Lehrens.⁶⁸

Tergit's *feuilleton* articles regularly provide comprehensive inventories of Berlin's streetscape, and external features constitute the main focus of her observations, reflecting the city's multiplicity. These are systematic perceptions, almost documentary in nature in terms of how they conform to a logical spatial order of 'real' urban spaces in Berlin: Tergit progresses from one place to the next, instead of diverging only to rejoin her passage through the city at a later

⁶⁵ Tergit, 'Liebeserklärung', p. 31.

⁶⁶ Tergit, 'Liebeserklärung', p. 30.

⁶⁷ Gleber, p. 97.

⁶⁸ Tergit, 'Heimat', p. 26.

point. She observes a range of spaces during her literary explorations of Berlin, including bars, cafés, lakesides, the river Spree, and entire districts. But as stated above, these locations are not scrutinised for any significant amount of time, but rather glanced upon in passing. Her article 'Eingewöhnen in Berlin' is a further illustration of the restlessness and abundance of impressions that infuse Tergit's journeys. It also demonstrates the swift shift between perspectives typical of her Berlin articles. 'Eingewöhnen' tells of Tergit's reluctant return to Berlin after a leisurely time away in the south of Germany. In contrast to her declaration of love to Berlin in other writings, Tergit now resents her homecoming.

Niemand, der das Glück hat, nach dem Süden des Landes zu reisen, wird leugnen, daß es zu den schauderhaftesten Momenten des Daseins gehört, wenn man die eisernen Eisenbahnbrücken und den imitierten Albrecht-Dürer-Turm am Anhalter Bahnhof nach längerer Abwesenheit erblickt [...] Bereits an der Tür erwartet dich der Fortschritt.⁶⁹

Specific urban spaces elicit a negative reaction, and Tergit anticipates the swift demise of her holiday humour and the inevitable return of the urban mentality, which makes her 'spitzzüngig, ernsthaft und erwachsen [...]'.⁷⁰ The city is associated with a state of mind in which earnestness and maturity dominate; the provinces by comparison are linked with a more playful and childlike sense of self: 'dein besseres Selbst, ein harmloses, verspieltes, etwas kindisches Selbst'.⁷¹ The relationship between the city and the provinces in Gabriele Tergit's article differs greatly from the one described in the writings of Kurt Tucholsky. As detailed in Chapter 5, he regarded the provinces as grave and dangerous; conversely, the city is viewed as a more benevolent, enlightened space. Tucholsky attacks southern Germany – Bavaria in particular – for being a stronghold of reactionary and nationalistic thinking.⁷²

Tergit endeavours to settle back into her customary existence in the city, and does so by roaming the streets of Berlin, trying to maintain the pretence that she is still elsewhere. She concedes that Berlin has its own charms, including

⁶⁹ Tergit, 'Eingewöhnen', p. 13.

⁷⁰ Ibid.

⁷¹ Ibid.

⁷² See for example Kurt Tucholsky's 1927 article 'Berlin! Berlin!', in Tucholsky, *GW*, vol. 5, pp. 185–188.

the lakes Wannsee and Nikolassee in the southwestern area of the city. The pace of her article soon quickens as Tergit changes tack and describes an advance, by car journey, towards Berlin: 'Autostraße nach Berlin. Funkturm. "Tempo, Initiative, Bewegung und Messeamt".'⁷³ The abrupt sentences and inclusion of citation suggest the symbolic power that Berlin's radio tower was striving to project (Kracauer's depiction of the Funkturm in 'Aus dem Fenster gesehen' postdates Tergit's article by four years). Constructed in the west of the city in 1926, one year prior to Tergit's *feuilleton*, the tower was a new addition to the cityscape and overlooked the *Messegelände*, established in the early 1920s to accommodate trade fairs and exhibitions. Tergit inhabits an 'aviatische Perspektive',⁷⁴ the sweeping view of Berlin from the heights of the Funkturm shaping her perception of the city below:

Dort unten liegt Berlin. – Berlin? Den Hauptplatz nimmt die Eisenbahn ein, Schienen, Schuppen, Häuschen, grün Bepflanztes, Eisengerüste. Hier vorn nach Charlottenburg zu, aber auch drüben, Lehrter Bahnhof. Anhalter, Potsdamer Bahn. Im ausgesparten Teil liegen die Häuser, die man Berlin nennt.⁷⁵

Tergit's perspective moves from the immense to the particular, taking in Berlin as a whole before scrutinising what she identifies as the city's constituent parts: railway stations and the surrounding industrial complex, and residential houses. Tergit guides our gaze, pointing to 'hier vorn' and 'drüben', spatial instructions that reinforce the perspective from on high. The monopoly that she perceives the railway to have on the city's landscape draws on what is a literary topos of the first two decades of the twentieth century: that of the predominance of the railways, and the tracks' improbably deep reach into Berlin's suburbs. They were analogous to lifelines, as veins that supplied the heart of the city with vital energies.⁷⁶

⁷³ Tergit, 'Eingewöhnen', p. 14.

⁷⁴ Marszałek and Sasse, 'Geopoetiken', in Marszałek and Sasse (eds), *Geopoetiken*, p. 17.

⁷⁵ Tergit, 'Eingewöhnen', p. 14.

⁷⁶ See also, for example, Georg Hermann's *Kubinke*. Here, the novel's protagonist, before submitting himself with trepidation to a physical screening prior to entering the Prussian military service, looks towards Berlin: 'Einen Augenblick sah Emil Kubinke noch zurück über den weiten, weiten Plan der Schienen. Da unten in der Tiefe zogen sie sich mit breiten Furchen bis in das riesige, graue, verdämmernde Häusermeer hinein [...]. Diese langen Herden von Güterwagen! Diese Lokomotivställe, die alle ihre Schienen auf einen Punkt schickten [...]. Oh, die langen Wellblechschuppen, wie graue Schlangen; diese Bahnhofshallen, die da fern, platt und breit lagen, gleich Riesenschildkröten und gar diese breiten Eingänge in das Häusermeer, daß die Züge ordentlich in sich einzutrinken schienen!'

Stations occupy an equally prominent position at ground level, forming a recurring urban feature in Tergit's articles. Besides operating as metaphorical spaces – symbolising departure and return, separation and reunion, and the experience of traversing distances in a lesser amount of time – railway stations represent points of reference in the city. For example, 'Liebeserklärung' refers to the illuminated sign of Berlin's underground railway at night, a welcome sight for commuter and bewildered visitor alike.⁷⁷ 'Durch die Nacht leuchtet das U der Untergrundbahn'.⁷⁸ The benign presence of the station differs from Roth's conception of stations as spaces of *disorientation*. He published a number of articles in which he describes railway stations in Berlin masquerading as cinemas or churches,⁷⁹ observing the lack of correspondence between what the exteriors of station buildings denote and their actual function. In Tergit's texts, station names are listed with frequency – alongside street names – as a means of evoking Berlin's topography: 'Lehrter Bahnhof. Atmosphäre aus Schwefeldunst, Kußfreiheit und Geschäftigkeit. [...] Invalidenstraße. Jungsmuseen [*sic*], Steine, Telegraphenmodelle und Walgerippe. Heidestraße. [...]'.⁸⁰ The semiotics of Berlin's urban environment, its architectural structures, thoroughfares and other street details, assist in bringing the city to life. Indeed, descriptions of her itineraries produce a distinct literary geography of Berlin. Tergit's journeys and the order of place names, like her transport paths in 'Heimat', tend to correspond to topographical reality, and could be reliably traced on a map of the city. At the same time, Tergit relies on local knowledge on behalf of the reader to decode a number of her spatial references: making sense, for example, of the reference to the 'Walgerippe' in the Invalidenstraße

Hermann, *Kubinke*, p. 287.

⁷⁷ Walther Kiaulehn, a colleague of Tergit's at the *Berliner Tageblatt*, writes about this particular apparition in his historical account of Berlin: 'Das leuchtende "U" ist ein großes Lusterlebnis, keiner vergißt es; die Kraft dieses Nachtsymbols ist unübertrefflich.' Kiaulehn, *Schicksal einer Weltstadt*, p. 25.

⁷⁸ Tergit, 'Liebeserklärung', p. 31.

⁷⁹ In the article 'Architektur' (1931), for example, Roth writes: 'Es kann geschehen, daß ich in der Hast einer bevorstehenden Reise zum Beispiel nach einem Kino suche, in der Meinung, einen Bahnhof zu finden'. Joseph Roth, 'Architektur', in Roth, *Werke*, vol. 3, pp. 115–116 (p. 115). See also "'Romantik" des Reisens', in which Roth writes: 'Nichts ärgerlicher als ein riesiger Bahnhof, der aussieht wie ein Kloster und vor dessen Eingang ich immer einen Moment überlege, ob ich nicht doch lieber die Schuhe ausziehen soll, statt den Gepäckträger zu rufen'. Joseph Roth, "'Romantik" des Reisens', in Roth, *Werke*, vol. 2, pp. 574–578 (p. 474, p. 475);

⁸⁰ Tergit, 'Eingewöhnen', p. 15.

requires familiarity with the area, and the fact that Berlin's Natural History Museum was (and is still) located there.

Tergit repeats the technique of using signifiers in the article, her act of registering details markedly paratactic: 'Und eine Durchschnittsstraße nach Moabit. Blumengeschäft, Butterhandlung, 87. Seifenfiliale. Bierquelle und im Zaun zwei Tische. Sommergartenersatz. Gericht und Kasernen.'⁸¹ Tergit's narrative form – the impressionistic, staccato style of listing – reflects her encounter with the urban environment as she moves through it by means of public transport, or the car. The cityscapes are inevitably transitory, marked by a variation in visuals, acoustics, tempo, and by disjointed scenery. As Ujma remarks, the rapid change in Tergit's observations can also be seen as a reflection of 'the high speed and breathlessness of the city',⁸² of its simultaneity and variety. There is seemingly no time to absorb and recount the city's totality. Instead, fragments and momentary images are dominant, and Tergit communicates the metropolitan milieu 'durch die Darstellung isolierter und kurzphasiger Momentaufnahmen'.⁸³ Tergit's articles at times also adopt a 'stream of consciousness' outpouring of internal monologues, which in turn mirror both the mutability of perceptions of street scenes and the subjective experience of the metropolis. 'Vorfrühlingsreise nach Berlin' embodies this method, as Tergit perceives the city's environment as a series of signifiers that trigger further associations:

Wilhelmstraße. Respekt. Linden, Lebenswandel: Wäsche und Historie. Exkremente der Perlmuschel und anderes Gestein. Eintrittskartenverkaufsstellen für die Welt. Propagandabureaus für Trollhättanwasserfälle, Rhonegletscher und tropische Inseln, Hotels, öde und langweilig, wenn man darin ist, und immer von großen Künstlern und achtzehnjährigen Schönheiten bewohnt, wenn man an ihnen vorbeifahren muss.⁸⁴

Tergit's 'Erzähltempo'⁸⁵ is also connected with the acceleration of life associated with the early decades of the twentieth century generally, and

⁸¹ Tergit, 'Eingewöhnen', p. 14, p. 15.

⁸² Ujma, p. 265.

⁸³ Sabina Becker, *Urbanität und Moderne. Studien zur Großstadt Wahrnehmung in der deutschen Literatur 1900-1930* (St. Ingbert: Röhrig, 1993), p. 65.

⁸⁴ Tergit, 'Vorfrühlingsreise', p. 19.

⁸⁵ Becker, "'...zu den Problemen der Realität zugelassen'", in Fähnders and Karrenbock (eds), *Autorinnen der Weimarer Republik*, p. 197.

metropolitan life in particular. The perception of time and space was altered by the mechanisation of urban life, and especially the electrification of public transport at the turn of the twentieth century. Increased mobility and faster transportation lessened the time it took to bridge the divide between two points. Modern modes of transport, such as the S- and U-Bahn on raised tracks, also afforded exceptional views of the city's components, which in turn moulded the traveller's understanding of the city in total. 'Heimat 75 resp. 78' exemplifies how Tergit's impressions of the city are shaped in part by her experience of it using Berlin's modes of transport. Indeed, her article suggests the educative value of travel, and how journeying out of one's habitual territory can alter perceptions of Berlin, revealing its physical mutability and social heterogeneity: 'Alle fünf Straßen hat diese Stadt ein anderes Gesicht. Andere Menschen im Einser, mittags um 12, andere 7 Uhr morgens, in der 25.'⁸⁶ Tergit's enjoyment of, and admiration for, electrification is obvious and distinct from Roth's suspicion of automation in general.⁸⁷ In the same article, Tergit charts the different social environments traversed during the course of a journey, her tram starting:

Im Grunewald. Geht über den Kurfürstendamm, kreuzt die Welt der neuen Läden, der feinen Jumper, der Rauchverzehrer und Bridgekultur, fährt [...] zum Umschlagplatz der Menschenware vom Westen und vom Osten, [...]. Mittendrin im Leben der Seifengeschäfte, Grünkramläden und kleinen Kneipen, und im Hinterhaus sind die Tischler und Schlosser.⁸⁸

Tergit's essay also captures scenes regularly observed from aboard her transportation. From the city's elevated S-Bahn, she reads in passing familiar names and inscriptions on shop fronts:

Wie man diese Dircksenstraße kennt, kurz vor dem Alex!
"Hausschuhindustrie" breit über die ganze Front,

⁸⁶ Tergit, 'Heimat', p. 26.

⁸⁷ The contemporary preoccupation with technology engendered particular ambivalence on Roth's behalf, and the image of man as automaton, even as slave tending his master, is a recurring feature in his work. One of the figures that exemplifies man's subservience to technology in Roth's writings is the reified traffic policeman. He is depicted by Roth – in his prose and his Berlin articles – as a 'Verkehrsautomat' whose 'fuchtelnde, ausholende Bewegungen mit den Armen' were intended to control the flow of traffic in Berlin. See Joseph Roth, 'Betrachtung über den Verkehr', p. 276, p. 278. See also his novel *Flucht ohne Ende*, in Roth, *Werke*, vol. 4, pp. 389–496 (p. 443).

⁸⁸ Tergit, 'Heimat', p. 25.

“Fruchtgroßhandlung”, “Fleischereigeräte”, “Satten”, “Mulden”,
“Kutter”, “Wölfe”, “Wurstspitzen”, “Eisenhuth-Käse” [...].⁸⁹

The first line implies collective knowledge of this particular street, which is situated precisely (‘kurz vor dem Alex’). Tergit’s act of listing visual signs is a trait used to convey the optical allure of the city, and the inclusion of commercial placards anticipates Alfred Döblin’s method in *Berlin Alexanderplatz* of ‘narrating’ the city through the use of montage and the inclusion of visual and audible stimuli encountered by the metropolitan citizen in urban spaces. Tergit, like Döblin, thus attempts to transmit the ‘realistic’ experience of simultaneous impressions that confront people in the city.

4.4 Traversing Space: Borders and Boundaries in Berlin

Tergit’s topographically centred articles are notable overall for their perspectival change, and for the practice, during the course of their introduction, of describing an advance towards and arrival into Berlin from the periphery, or even further afield. ‘Eingewöhnen in Berlin’ opens with the (unwelcome) re-entry into the city after holidaying in South Germany, while ‘Vorfrühlingsreise nach Berlin’ and ‘Liebeserklärung an diese Stadt’ advance upon Berlin from the west of the city. (Even ‘Das Abenteuer in K...titz’ tells indirectly of events based on *not* arriving in Berlin from the provinces). The exception is ‘Heimat 75 resp. 78’, which begins *in medias res* and highlights the variety of voyages that can be made all through Berlin. Tergit’s theme, then, is usually one of arrival in the city, followed by urban scenes and her departure, or a slightly modified recapitulation of the essay’s opening scenario. A device common to her ‘mobile’ essays is the setting of Wannsee in the southwest of Berlin as the point of departure for her journey into the metropolitan centre, one that typically terminates in the east of Berlin. The gradual move towards Berlin gives structure to the literary city, and allows for scenes to unfold gradually, thus reducing the shock of the urban when it finally appears. ‘Liebeserklärung an diese Stadt’ illustrates Tergit’s technique of travelling into Berlin and letting the city unfurl sequentially. Beginning with a wistful eulogy to the passing of summer whilst sitting at Wannsee, Tergit’s article subsequently tells of her route

⁸⁹ Tergit, ‘Heimat’, p. 27.

towards the city. The sense of fondness that governs 'Liebeserklärung' lies partly in the anticipation of her arrival in Berlin from its outer edges:

Wir hatten an dem Abend, von dem ich reden will, ein letztes Mal am Wannsee gegessen. Überm See sank die Sonne, hinter tausendfarbigen Wolken, sitzenden, lauernden, goldgeränderten Fabeltieren. [...] Der Sommer vergeht, aber Wannsee besteht. [...] Dann führen wir Ihnen entgegen, geliebte, unendlich geliebte Stadt.⁹⁰

When she finally enters the city, Tergit's address to Berlin becomes more muted, as she is 'umwallt [...] vom eigenen Dunst, von den Ausatmungen von Mensch und Tier, vom Rauch, der aus den Häusern steigt und sich niedersenkt'.⁹¹ Berlin is now the 'sehr gewaltige Stadt',⁹² viewed from its very heart. The dialectics of distance and closeness (outside and inside of the city), and the process of crossing an invisible border into Berlin, might be considered a means of conveying its extremes: the city as a sprawling and bewildering maze-like entity stands out against the transparency and the calm of the rural ambience. Descriptions of the natural scenery of lakes and forests at Wannsee conflict with the hectic pace and sensory overload of the urban core.⁹³

The concept of Berlin as a space that is entered and exited is joined by another trope, namely the tendency to divide up the city itself. Tergit perceives the boundaries *within* Berlin, observing Berlin's topographical split into commercial, industrial and residential areas: 'Da, wo die Geschäftshäuser aufhören und die endlosen Reihen der Häuser voll Menschen beginnen'.⁹⁴ She considers the city to possess a beginning and an end point, and the traversal of visible and invisible boundaries within Berlin is not a seamless transition from

⁹⁰ Tergit, 'Liebeserklärung', p. 28.

⁹¹ Tergit, 'Liebeserklärung', p. 29.

⁹² Ibid.

⁹³ Tergit's literary representation bears some similarities to Walther Ruttmann's experimental film *Berlin. Die Sinfonie der Großstadt* (1927), produced in the same year as Tergit's article. The film depicts a day in the city, beginning with a train journey from a rural environment into Berlin. *Sinfonie* shows the gradual awakening of the city, industrial work rhythms, and the leisure activities enjoyed by Berliners in both lakeside settings and parks, and in the city's amusement establishments. Tergit's article portrays a similar rhythm though she inverts the order of the day. Her article describes an evening progressing into morning but also focuses on the journey into the city from the outside, the sudden change of pace as the city is reached, and the many places of pleasure the city has to offer. Both film and *feuilleton* article employ montage sequences to transmit the sense of motion and the passing of time, and to capture the fragmented nature and simultaneity that define the metropolis.

⁹⁴ Tergit, 'Liebeserklärung', p. 29. See also Tergit, 'Eingewöhnen in Berlin', p. 14: 'Berlin? Den Hauptplatz nimmt die Eisenbahn ein [...]. Im ausgesparten Teil liegen die Häuser, die man Berlin nennt'.

one district to the next, but an action regularly remarked upon. Moreover, Tergit, whilst depicting Berlin's segregation along geographical lines, also highlights socio-economic division, with the respective districts characterised accordingly.

'Eingewöhnen in Berlin' describes Tergit's movements from West Berlin through to the east of the city, whose starting point is symbolised by Alexanderplatz. The aesthetics of the city's environment undergo change, and the east is at once associated with misfortune and deficiency: 'Der Osten beginnt, ohne Baum, ohne Strauch, grau in grau [...]'.⁹⁵ The dreary surroundings appear to have a disabling function, as Tergit describes how a young boy's kite fails to rise in what she terms the thick, soup-like atmosphere, 'euphemistisch "Luft" genannt'.⁹⁶ The image contrasts strongly with her description (written in the same year) in 'Lieberserklärung' of Berlin's 'Luft [...] aus Freiheit, Frechheit und Benzin',⁹⁷ for which Tergit expresses appreciation. The portrayal of East Berlin's shortcomings and depressed milieu continue in further geographical descriptions of Andreasplatz, an area known for its sprawling *Mietskasernen*, and for being part of the red-light district that stretched around the station Ostbahnhof: 'Andreasplatz [...] sechs grüne Bäume und eine Steinbank, einziger grüner Fleck von der Wallstraße bis zum Ostbahnhof'.⁹⁸ Tergit, like Roth, makes an inventory of the area's sparse vegetation, the absence of significant greenery a measurement of social-economic hardship. The neglected environment reflects the desperation of its residents. A similar pattern of drawing boundaries between West and East Berlin is observable in 'Vorfrühlingsreise nach Berlin', which further emphasises socio-economic segmentation. The *feuilleton* follows a specific narrative sequence, and depicts the cyclical pattern of week-time activity, alleviated by leisure pursuits at the weekend. Beginning in western Berlin on a Sunday, the article journeys backwards in time and through the city's respective districts. Relatively short weekend descriptions bracket more comprehensive weekday actions, reflecting the weekdays' prolonged stretch across time, and the brevity of the weekend itself.⁹⁹ Time and space are closely linked, as certain days of

⁹⁵ Tergit, 'Eingewöhnen', p. 16.

⁹⁶ Ibid.

⁹⁷ Tergit, 'Lieberserklärung', p. 31.

⁹⁸ Tergit, 'Eingewöhnen', p. 17.

⁹⁹ Only Sundays were considered to mark the genuine weekend; Saturdays remained working

the week are synonymous with particular locations in Berlin: Sundays, then, are characterised by lakeside activities commonly enjoyed at Berlin's Wannsee ('Segel, Jollen, Paddel, Ruder').¹⁰⁰ Saturday evenings arrive and are portrayed as being designated for another type of pleasure, located in the city's places of amusement: 'Du mündest rasch in den Sonnabendabend, in die Vergnügungsstraße ein. Kino, Cafe, Restaurant, d.h. Paläste, Marmor, Gloria und Königin, Sekt, elegante Kleider, Charleston und Jazz [...]' (18). Tergit's extensive catalogue of activities taking place on Berlin's 'Vergnügungsstraße' communicates what were the privileges of the bourgeoisie, whose activities were centred predominantly on the boulevards, or 'Vergnügungsstraßen', Kurfürstendamm and Unter den Linden – though these are not named specifically. The onset of the weekday, meanwhile, signals all-round activity. Tergit proceeds to produce a socio-spatial study of the city's places of work, which reveals stark social differences between Berlin's districts. For example, her description of men going to work begins in wealthy western Berlin:

Fluten der Autos in die Bureaus, Dickbäuche in der Limousine im Nerzpelz, junge Herren am Steuer, schon hellgrau und mantellos, Zigarette im Mund, regieren aus dem rechten Handgelenk die Maschine. [...] Brücke über den Kanal. "Alter Westen." Hausrat aus Wilhelms Zeiten wird versteigert. "Reichgeschnitzte Büfets." Tiergarten. (18)

Tergit's sketch gradually moves inwards to the historical centre, homing on the city's white-collar workers. Progressing further east towards Alexanderplatz, described as 'das Herz der großen Stadt' (18), proletarian Berlin begins, which Tergit evokes by listing audible clues that symbolise the district of work and industry: 'enge Höfe, Häuser voll Menschen, voll Nähmaschinen, voll Hobeln und Hämmern und Stampfen' (20).

She notably identifies Potsdamer Tor, situated in Berlin's centre, as marking the beginning of Berlin proper: 'Potsdamer Tor. Berlin ist erreicht. Das Berlin, wo man "zu tun" hat' (19).¹⁰¹ Potsdamer Tor originally belonged to Berlin's city

days for the majority of people. The silent film *Menschen am Sonntag* from 1930 (based on a screenplay by Billy Wilder) depicts weekend activities by a group of young Berliners at the end of the 1920s, which include an outing to Wannsee on a Sunday.

¹⁰⁰ Tergit, 'Vorfrühlingsreise', p. 17. Future references from this source will be indicated by page numbers in round brackets directly after the quotation in the main text.

¹⁰¹ The phrase 'zu tun' was satirised by Kurt Tucholsky who thought it symbolic of Berliners' compulsion to be *doing* something at all times.

walls and demarcated the entrance to the city from the western *Residenzstadt* Potsdam. The gate is a topographical feature that represents the split between districts that are considered genuinely industrious (eastern Berlin) and those that are given to very little physical activity indeed (western and central Berlin). The sense of segmentation in Berlin continues with Tergit's view of Alexanderplatz as the heart of Berlin. Her description follows customary 1920s patterns of perception as regards body metaphors: the heart in this instance refers to Alexanderplatz' vital position in the city. It is a commercial centre, with a central station, major intersections, and is also a meeting point.

Tergit calls attention to the differing workday rhythms as they exist in western and eastern Berlin, 'jenseits des Herzens' (20). Clerical staff from the suburbs commence work at nine a.m. By comparison, proletarian East Berlin collectively begins its day three hours earlier, the time imbalance reflecting socio-economic difference. Tergit underscores the divide by recording the opulence of shop displays in the West: 'Schönheitsgeschäfte für die wenigen. Exquisite Stücke. "Queen Anne" und "Jakob", Specksteinbuddhas. Kakemonos und Tabatieren. Modenschau, Laden bei Laden, blaßgrau, bleu madonne, bois rosé') (18), and then noting the social reverse side of the city – East Berlin's:

verfallene Häuser, beklebt von oben bis unten mit grellen Schildern. "Möbel auf Abzahlung", "Schuhlokal", "Strumpfvertrieb", "Hosenzentrale", "Kleiderhof". Arbeitslose gehen zum Stempeln, stehen herum, verkaufen Hosenträger, Kämmchen, Leim, Schokolade "drei Tafeln eene Mark". Alte Kleider hängen überm Lumpenkeller, "zahle höchste Preise", zum Verkauf aus. (20)

Tergit's article characteristically catalogues in detail the social environment east of Alexanderplatz; the bars, shops, 'alte Fabriken' (20), all of which make manifest the area's neglect. For a local readership, the evocation of its own city in this manner familiarises space: Tergit's descriptions elicit recognition, conjure a specific surrounding and emotion. Her exploration of Berlin ends at Wisbyer Straße in the northeastern district of Prenzlauer Berg, and she notes how Berlin's outer border has been reached ('Berlin ist zu Ende') (21) with a reference to the street's location at the northernmost part of the ring road that

encircled Berlin.¹⁰² The edge of the city is synonymous with economic and spatial segregation from the city core, and Tergit visualises the marginal setting: 'Freies Gelände, Gerümpel in Gruben, Emailletöpfe, Konservenbüchsen, zeretzter Stoff, Schienen, Wege der Sehnsucht nach warmer Sonne'.¹⁰³

4.5 Defined Urban Spaces

Diagnostic observations in Tergit's writings are relatively rare, since her roaming eye seldom penetrates the visible surface of the city. Unlike Roth, whose articles often home in on an urban feature,¹⁰⁴ Tergit is usually a surveyor of an entire landscape, which changes rapidly as she moves through it. There is, however, evidence that Tergit on occasion transcends superficial inspection of Berlin's topographical features, and draws attention to the city as an urban terrain with its very own narrative. For example, she points to the city as constituting a series of *Schauplätze* – places or sites of historical significance that assume a dramatic presence after major personal experiences. These sites, moreover, become catalysts for reflection on times past. 'Vorfrühlingsreise nach Berlin' makes open references to eminent scientific and literary figures in German history (Helmholtz, Mommsen, Humboldt, and Heine, among others), prompted in part by specific spaces – the Humboldt University and its library – observed in contemporary Berlin. 'Eingewöhnen in Berlin', meanwhile, is punctuated by personal and shared recollections, prompted by a particular street and its buildings:

Heidestraße, August. Wieder August. Wißt ihr noch. Preußische Bau- und Finanzdirektion, Bezirksausschuß für den Stadtkreis Berlin. Und dann bekam man eine Karte, daß Zivilsachen abzuholen seien, wohingegen dem Kanonier ... Vier Jahre später.¹⁰⁵

The elliptical sentences signal an incomplete thought, which suggests it is 'a collective memory too common amongst Berliners to need full explanation',¹⁰⁶ a

¹⁰² As per the *Berliner Bebauungsplan* (or land development plan) devised by James Hobrecht in 1862.

¹⁰³ Tergit, 'Vorfrühlingsreise', p. 21.

¹⁰⁴ See for example Joseph Roth, 'Die tönende Mauer' in Roth, *Werke*, vol. 1, pp. 715–718; 'Ein Unpolitischer geht in den Reichstag', and 'Der Friedhof des Panoptikums' in Roth, *Werke*, vol. 2, pp. 201–202.

¹⁰⁵ Tergit, 'Eingewöhnen', p. 15.

¹⁰⁶ Weiss-Sussex, 'Female Experience of the City', p. 52.

further indicator that Tergit's writings assume familiarity with the surroundings on behalf of the reader. At the same time, she demonstrates her own subjective awareness of the city. In 'Liebeserklärung' Tergit sits in 'einem Café im Osten',¹⁰⁷ and is reminded of both the violence and headiness of the November Revolution in Berlin: 'Damals, fünf Minuten von hier, saß im Hinterstübchen Eichhorn,¹⁰⁸ draußen knatterten die Maschinengewehre, Matrosen, Zeitungsgründung, junges Wollen, Azetylenlampen und Geldsuche'.¹⁰⁹ Martin Herold refers to Tergit's Berlin as a 'überindividuelle Erinnerungslandschaft',¹¹⁰ the urban landscape a carrier of, and trigger for, personal recollections.

The concept of urban spaces being closely intertwined with history – evoking both collective and individual impressions – is most evident in 'Der Landwehrkanal. Die Geschichte einer Straße' (1928), which explores one of Berlin's key waterways, and 'Ein Laden in Berlin' (1925), an article that charts the transitions undergone by a shop in Berlin between 1913 and 1925. Both portrayals illustrate Tergit's technique of focusing on a defined space in order to conjure history as it played out in Berlin. Her article 'Der Landwehrkanal' is structured around the (rhetorical) debate as to whether the canal ought – as suggested before the First World War – to be filled in and transformed into a 'Prachtstraße'.¹¹¹ The question prompts Tergit to narrate the historical role of the canal, and how it is both a backdrop to, and reminder of, significant events in the past. She begins by situating the canal, before summarising its function and significance:

Der Landwehrkanal, von dem wir sprechen wollen, reicht vom Hafenplatz bis zum Tiergarten. Vor dem Kriege war er, erstens, die Trennung zwischen dem ganz erstklassigen alten Westen, den Querstraßen der Tiergartenstraße und dem nicht ganz erstklassigen alten Westen, der sich bis zur Kurfürstenstraße erstreckt, er war zweitens ein Gegenstand der Wirtschaft, er war drittens ein Streitobjekt.¹¹²

¹⁰⁷ Tergit, 'Liebeserklärung', p. 30.

¹⁰⁸ Emil Eichhorn was a journalist and SPD politician who, on 9th November 1918, was elected as Berlin's Chief of Police but was removed from office in early 1919 in the wake of political unrest and the capture of the police headquarters.

¹⁰⁹ Tergit, 'Liebeserklärung', p. 30.

¹¹⁰ Herold, p. 57.

¹¹¹ Gabriele Tergit, 'Der Landwehrkanal. Die Geschichte einer Straße', in Tergit, *Blüten*, pp. 42–45 (p. 42).

¹¹² Tergit, 'Landwehrkanal', p. 42.

In addition to dividing areas into wealthy and less affluent districts, the canal banks first witnessed nocturnal marches by troops into the First World War, then became a public area in which revolutionary activity and political demonstrations were played out after November 1918. On a more poignant note, Tergit portrays in graphic terms the murder of Communist leader Rosa Luxemburg in January 1919, and pinpoints exactly where her body was deposited of:

Aber nahe dabei, dort, wo wie Menschengedung aufhört und der Park anfängt, wo der Kanal Landschaft wird, wurde an einem dunklen Abend Rosa Luxemburg erschlagen, erschossen und ins Wasser geworfen [...].¹¹³

Another passage depicts the hearse of Friedrich Ebert, the first *Reichspräsident* of the Weimar Republic who died in 1925, travelling along the canal path one last time. Both fatalities contribute to the impression that, despite its semi-rural appearance, the Landwehrkanal is not a wholly pleasant feature in Berlin, but – as Roth also demonstrated – has been a witness to death in its various guises in the city.

Tergit employs an almost identical means of registering the times through the evocation of a specific space in 'Ein Laden in Berlin'. Here, the (mis-) fortunes of a shop parallel the socio-economic and political situation prevailing in the city and country. Tergit sketches the store's successive incarnations over the years, as it evolved from being a beauty salon in pre-war times to being a collection point 'für alte Wollsachen',¹¹⁴ before selling basic food items during the First World War. Then:

[...] wurde der Laden leer. Es gab weder etwas vorneherum noch hintenherum in ihm. Der Herbst wurde stürmisch. Auf irgendeinem Dach gegenüber hatte sich ein Maschinengewehr etabliert, später zog in den Laden für kurze Zeit ein Mann, der Azetylenlampen verkaufte.¹¹⁵

The veiled reference to tumultuous times and revolutionary activity (revolutionists on rooftops with guns) is followed by allusions to black market activity, reflecting the Weimar Republic's first major inflationary crisis in 1923.

¹¹³ Tergit, 'Landwehrkanal', p. 43.

¹¹⁴ Gabriele Tergit, 'Ein Laden in Berlin', in Tergit, *Blüten*, pp. 20–23 (p. 20).

¹¹⁵ Tergit, 'Ein Laden in Berlin', p. 21.

The presence of a car store was later testament to better times, before a hairdresser with a perfume shop, and finally a café, signalled the relative prosperity brought about by a period of economic stability after 1923 / 24. The changing streetscapes conveyed in these descriptions symbolise the ephemeral nature of urban scenery in general. However, Tergit's texts notably describe temporality by foregrounding spatiality: canal and store are the physical expression of layered time; are spaces that, in the words of Aleida Assmann, reveal the 'Gleichzeitigkeit des Ungleichzeitigen',¹¹⁶ or the interplay between the past and present. Tergit's depictions can be read as what Schlögel calls 'topographisch zentrierte Geschichtsschreibung',¹¹⁷ where the examination of specific urban spaces, and what is enacted upon them, helps inform the historic perception of the era, and of Berlin. History is seen to have a definite place; chronology can, in other words, be sited.

4.6 Conclusion

Unlike the topographical hierarchy that can be observed in Joseph Roth's writings, which privileges 'real' areas of neglect in the north of Berlin over the affluent districts of West Berlin, Tergit notably avoids the focus on one form of space over another in her literary explorations of the city. Moreover, unlike Roth's value judgement and attention paid to social disadvantage, Tergit's portrayals – while they also locate poverty – do not exhibit a critical social consciousness, or explore socio-economic reality to any significant extent. She does, however, map the city's contrasts and fragmentation, as visible in her partitioning of the city. Indeed, Berlin's composition is subject to categorisation: Tergit reveals socio-economic and aesthetic differentiation between districts, between West and East Berlin; presents the city as an entity that is entered and exited, as being viewed from afar and from within, and as possessing an urban environment that is abundant with markers and points of reference. Tergit's Berlin is structured around what Kevin Lynch identifies as a city's 'elements': paths, edges, nodes, districts, and landmarks. These help inform the images of

¹¹⁶ Aleida Assmann, 'Geschichte findet Stadt', in Csáky and Leitgeb (eds), *Kommunikation. Gedächtnis. Raum*, pp.13–27 (p. 18).

¹¹⁷ Schlögel, p. 11.

cities in the mind of the individual. Applied to Tergit's articles, then, paths are the railroads and streets from which she observes the urban environment. Edges constitute the boundaries in Berlin, which Tergit perceives to be separation points, dividing one area from another (the west from the east, as in the Potsdamer Tor). Nodes 'are the focus and epitome of a district, over which their influence radiates and of which they stand as a symbol,'¹¹⁸ and feature in Tergit's writings in the form of, for example, Alexanderplatz. Tergit alludes to districts both by name – Tiergarten, Moabit, Alter Westen –, and by reference to geographical direction ('Norden', 'Osten', 'Süden', 'Westen'), as a means of distinguishing her location. Lastly, Tergit's stations, streets and other 'urban detail'¹¹⁹ conform to Lynch's definition of a landmark: physical entities that act as orientation points.

Despite the different perspectives of Berlin, and thus different perceptions of its spaces, Tergit nevertheless appears to conceive of the city as a cohesive network of intersecting routes and areas. This impression owes much to her literary technique of journeying – in a continuous movement – through the city in her writings. Returning to the opening quote by Willi Frächter and the concept of Berlin's being capable of being 'told' only through the medium of film, Tergit's writings might indeed, as noted above, be likened to a filmic exploration, her fleeting, impressionistic representation analogous to the fluidity of images captured by the camera (see the earlier reference to *Sinfonie der Großstadt*). She conveys a sense of Berlin's connectivity, effectively retaining the city's integrity, or wholeness. Tergit's presentation of Berlin's urban landscapes in just a few articles highlights her detailed knowledge of, and interaction with, the city and produces a map characterised by highly personal topographies.

¹¹⁸ Lynch, p. 48.

¹¹⁹ Ibid.

CHAPTER FIVE

KURT TUCHOLSKY: BERLIN AS POLITICAL SPACE

Kurt Tucholsky was one of the Weimar Republic's most vocal writers and commentators, and in the period between 1907 (when he wrote his first text for the weekly satirical magazine, *Ulk*) until shortly before his death in 1935 published poems, glosses, letters, book critiques, essays, polemics, two stories,¹ and, moreover, *feuilleton* articles that assessed and criticised events shaping the new Republic after the First World War.

Tucholsky was a native of Berlin, though, unlike Gabriele Tergit, who explicitly declared her love for the city in some of her *feuilleton* articles, Tucholsky frequently expressed his aversion to it.² In fact, Tucholsky spent only eleven years of his adult life living in the city, before relocating to Paris in 1924 to work as a correspondent for the *Vossische Zeitung*.³ His move to France had been precipitated by intermittent episodes of depression,⁴ caused in part by what he viewed as alarming changes to the political landscape in the German capital as well as in the country. His departure was more or less permanent, with return visits to Germany being of short duration only.⁵

¹ Kurt Tucholsky's only short prose novels published are *Rheinsberg. Ein Bilderbuch für Verliebte* (1912) and *Schloss Gripsholm* (1931).

² See, for example, the following sentiment in Tucholsky's article 'Berlin! Berlin': 'Ich liebe Berlin nicht. [...] Ich liebe diese Stadt nicht, der ich mein Bestes verdanke; wir grüßen uns kaum.' Kurt Tucholsky, 'Berlin! Berlin!', in Mary Gerold-Tucholsky and Fritz J. Raddatz (eds), *Kurt Tucholsky. Gesammelte Werke in 10 Bänden*, vol. 5 (Reinbek bei Hamburg: Rowohlt, 1975), pp. 185–188 (p. 188). All further references to this edition will be abbreviated to *GW*, followed by the volume and page number.

³ Returning to the city after the war in 1918, Tucholsky immediately began working as editor-in-chief for *Ulk*, the satirical supplement of the *Berliner Tageblatt*, as well as contributing to the *Weltbühne*, and composing texts and chansons for cabaret. In 1923 the inflationary crisis drove Tucholsky to take up work in a bank but he quickly became dispirited and returned to journalism and the *Weltbühne*.

⁴ See Michael Hepp, *Kurt Tucholsky. Biographische Annäherungen* (Reinbek bei Hamburg: Rowohlt, 1993), p. 237.

⁵ Kurt Tucholsky left Germany permanently in 1929 and ceased writing for the *Weltbühne* in 1932. His avoidance of the country was due in part to the threats of legal action for articles considered slanderous. In 1931, for example, Tucholsky feared risking his freedom by returning to Germany to attend the trial of his colleague and former co-editor Carl von Ossietzky, who was accused of treason and sentenced to eighteen months of imprisonment after reporting on the illegal rearmament process of the *Reichswehr* in *Die Weltbühne*. Tucholsky's disengagement with Germany, however, was largely the result of his resignation and feelings of impotence at the rise and eventual take-over of power by the Nazis. His attempts to mobilise democratic Germans against the enemies of the Republic had in his

This chapter will reveal how, in Tucholsky's articles, Berlin features prominently as a symbol both of transition – at the forefront of progressive modernity – and also, paradoxically, of continuity of the old system in Germany. In the following analysis, the emphasis will be on this dual character of Berlin, and Tucholsky's belief that little if anything had changed in the German mentality after the war. Tucholsky's portrayal of Berlin notably steers away from explicit depictions that favour the tangible aspect of visible urban geography, and fulfil the desire for concrete images. Instead, Tucholsky's writings construct a more multilayered and ambiguous – and thus more nuanced – mental map of the interwar city and of the period. As will be shown, Tucholsky's *feuilletons* betray what Andrew Piper refers to as a 'spatialized temporal awareness',⁶ which bears some similarities to the mapping of the era undertaken by Roth in his writings. Tucholsky, however, draws on rather more abstract spatial categories to articulate the times.

5.1 Introduction

Kurt Tucholsky wrote for a wide range of newspapers and magazines, including the *Vossische Zeitung*, the *Berliner Illustrierte Zeitung*, *Prager Tagblatt*, *Die Welt am Montag*, and, prior to the First World War, the SPD's central organ, *Vorwärts*. The most famous publication to employ Tucholsky was the weekly left-wing intellectual journal *Die Weltbühne*, which encouraged Tucholsky's political journalism (and which he edited between December 1926 and May 1927, after the death of Siegfried Jacobsohn, and before handing over editorship to Carl von Ossietzky). Given his prolific output, Tucholsky adopted a number of aliases (Ignaz Wrobel, Kasper Hauser, Peter Panter and Theobald Tiger), to prevent readers from becoming tired of seeing his name in print: 'Eine kleine Wochenschrift mag nicht viermal denselben Mann in einer Nummer haben, und so entstanden zum Spaß diese homunculi'.⁷ His pseudonyms

eyes failed to be effective. His books were banned and burned under the regime, and Tucholsky was expatriated.

⁶ Piper, 'Mapping Vision', in Fisher and Mennel (eds), *Spatial Turns*, p. 35.

⁷ Kurt Tucholsky, 'Start', in Tucholsky, *GW*, vol. 5, pp. 434–436 (p. 434).

enabled him to assume various character traits and moods in his articles, each representative of a differing point of view.⁸

Tucholsky's oeuvre is renowned for its apparent breadth of coverage. His articles can, however, be said to circle around a relatively small group of persistently argued subjects, presented to the readership in varying forms, for example, poems in jargon or Berlin dialect (Tucholsky's signature talent for writing 'berlinisch' is well known),⁹ polemics, satires and lucid reportage. Above all, Tucholsky was a political journalist who, like Joseph Roth, recognised early on the survival after the war of nationalistic, chauvinist tendencies in Germany's legal and educational institutions, and predicted the rise to prominence of the National Socialists.¹⁰ His observations of the unconcealed nationalistic zeal of the Republic's opponents compelled him to write and mobilise readers against those whom he perceived to be the enemies of a democratic state, which included the judiciary, officialdom, profiteers, capitalists, reactionary academics and *Bürger*. Also like Joseph Roth, Tucholsky avoided formulating his observations into overarching theories and mistrusted philosophical treatises. Rather than taking an abstract approach to his writing, he sought more subtle means of encoding his views: '[er] arbeitete sich mit Vorliebe an fiktiven Konstellationen, an Meinungsäußerungen oder literarischen Texten anderer Autoren ab, um die eigene Position mehr oder weniger verhüllt zu erkennen zu geben'.¹¹

Tucholsky, who trained as a lawyer, also attended trials at the criminal courts in Moabit, and though he wrote fewer reports than Tergit or Roth, he was more explicit in his criticism of what he regarded as the overtly politically biased justice system in Germany.¹² For example, he observed the trial of

⁸ Tucholsky made it clear, however, that all five of his 'voices' were united in their opposition to German nationalism and militarism. See 'Wir alle fünf', in Tucholsky, *GW*, vol. 3, pp. 267–269.

⁹ See Wolfgang Hering (ed.), *Kurt Tucholsky. Sprache ist eine Waffe* (Reinbek bei Hamburg: Rowohlt, 1989).

¹⁰ See, for example, Kurt Tucholsky, 'Die Reichswehr', in Tucholsky, *GW*, vol. 3, pp. 134–135; 'Was wäre, wenn...?', in Tucholsky, *GW*, vol. 3, pp. 201–206; 'Die deutsche Pest', in Tucholsky, *GW*, vol. 8, pp. 129–133.

¹¹ Dieter Mayer, *Kurt Tucholsky. Joseph Roth. Walter Mehring. Beiträge zu Politik und Kultur zwischen den Weltkriegen* (Frankfurt a. M.: Peter Lang, 2010), p. 39.

¹² Tucholsky thematised the injustice of the legal system of the Weimar Republic in a number of articles with the allegorical representation of 'Justitia', who, rather than being blindfolded to ensure impartiality, can in fact see and is anything but objective. See 'Spartakus im Moabit', in Tucholsky, *GW*, vol. 2, p. 50, and 'Justitia schwofft!', in Tucholsky, *GW*, vol. 7, pp.

those accused of murdering the Communist leaders Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg in January 1919, describing the proceedings as a farce, since the judge appeared sympathetic to the defendants and their anti-leftist, pro-monarchist outlook: 'Dies hier ist ein Kriegsgericht, zusammengesetzt aus Kameraden der Angeklagten.'¹³ He named and shamed judges he considered rude and incompetent ('Sie richten schlecht').¹⁴ Like Tergit, Tucholsky also drew attention to the militarism present in the courtroom, and his writings serve to highlight the larger picture about the political nature of murders in Berlin, and how deaths involving a political dimension appeared to justify, or lessen the impact of, a killing in the minds of judges and perpetrators.¹⁵ The failure of the law courts to mete out penalties on a genuinely impartial basis and what he regarded as obvious 'Klassenjustiz'¹⁶ (the abuse of power in favour of the ruling class) were topics Tucholsky addressed in his writings repeatedly.¹⁷

A considerable amount of research has been undertaken on numerous aspects of Tucholsky's life and work, including Michael Hepp's detailed biography and investigations of the topics of Judaism, justice and war in Tucholsky's writings.¹⁸ His relationship with, and portrayal of, France¹⁹ and the United States,²⁰ his use of language, satire and the Berlin dialect, as well as his role as a left-wing cultural critic, pacifist and political commentator in the

288–289.

¹³ Kurt Tucholsky, 'Die lebendigen Toten', in Tucholsky, *GW*, vol. 2, pp. 95–99 (p. 96).

¹⁴ Kurt Tucholsky, 'Wiedersehen mit der Justiz', in Tucholsky, *GW*, vol. 5, pp. 193–197 (p. 194).

¹⁵ See, for example, Kurt Tucholsky, 'Die Mordkommission', in Tucholsky, *GW*, vol. 2, pp. 338–340, in which Tucholsky criticises a murder investigation that was taking place in Berlin at he time. Military officers had killed a man, who was allegedly a pacifist and Communist, on his property, yet the court frustrates efforts at identifying the perpetrators and bringing them to justice, since it appears to have been a politically motivated murder.

¹⁶ Mayer, p. 181.

¹⁷ See Kurt Tucholsky, 'Prozess Marloh', in Tucholsky, *GW*, vol. 2, pp. 223–227.

¹⁸ See Michael Hepp, *Kurt Tucholsky. Biographische Annäherungen* (Reinbek bei Hamburg: Rowohlt, 1993); Kurt Tucholsky-Gesellschaft, *Kurt Tucholsky und das Judentum. Dokumentation der Tagung der Kurt-Tucholsky-Gesellschaft vom 19. bis 22. Oktober 1995 in Berlin* (Oldenburg: Bibliotheks- und Informationssystem der Univ. Oldenburg, 1996); Kurt Tucholsky-Gesellschaft, *Kurt Tucholsky und die Justiz. Dokumentation der Tagung der Kurt-Tucholsky-Gesellschaft vom 23.-26.10.1997 in Berlin* (Oldenburg: Bibliotheks- und Informationssystem der Universität Oldenburg, 1998).

¹⁹ See Eva Philippoff, *Kurt Tucholskys Frankreichbild* (Munich: Minerva, 1978), and Stephanie Burrows, *Tucholsky and France*, *MHRA Texts and Dissertations*, 55 (Leeds: Maney, Publishing for the Modern Humanities Research Association, 2001).

²⁰ Wilhelm Greiner, 'Bei euch in Amerika – bei uns in Europa'. *Kurt Tucholskys Amerikabild* (Hildesheim, et al.: Olms-Weidmann, 1994).

Weltbühne journal,²¹ have been examined. Nele Lenz has collected his Berlin-centred *feuilletons*,²² whilst a symposium held in 2003 explored 'Tucholsky's Berlin', with emphasis on the prevailing socio-cultural atmosphere of Berlin during the time in which Tucholsky published his works.²³ A more recent study by Dieter Mayer explores the contributions made by Tucholsky, Joseph Roth and Walter Mehring to Germany's cultural and political life during the interwar period. Mayer's chapter on Tucholsky's time in France between 1924 and 1926 provides a useful insight into Tucholsky's observations of both Paris and Berlin, and his endeavours in his capacity as foreign correspondent to improve French-German relations.²⁴ What research has failed to reflect on thus far, however, is the importance of space in Tucholsky's journalistic oeuvre, specifically how his perception and experience of Berlin (and Germany on a wider scale) after the First World War are conveyed through spatial observations.²⁵ His *feuilleton* articles, I argue, display a pronounced spatiality, despite Tucholsky's paying scant attention to the materiality of Berlin, its 'urban organisation'²⁶ and aesthetics. He also makes few attempts at evoking urban life or presenting Berlin as a landscape open for discovery, as Tergit perceives it to be. What further distinguishes his *feuilletons* from Tergit's and, more importantly, from Roth's writings, is the absence of in-depth investigations of social reality in Berlin. Tucholsky was no peripatetic reporter who investigated the city's dark recesses, or explored in person the poor socio-economic milieus foregrounded and mapped by Roth. As Jan Eik comments: 'Es ist anzunehmen, daß [...] Tucholsky wie die meisten Leute aus den "besseren" Gesellschaftskreisen seine Heimatstadt östlich des Alex kaum kannte und selten besuchte'.²⁷ He

²¹ Istvan Deak, *Weimar Germany's Left-Wing Intellectuals: A Political History of the Weltbühne and Its Circle* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1968).

²² Nele Lenz (ed.), *Tucholsky in Berlin. Gesammelte Feuilletons 1912-1930* (Berlin: Berlin Story, 2007).

²³ See Eckart Rottka and Natalie Rottka (eds), *Tucholskys Berlin. Dokumentation der Tagung 2003 "... ein wahnwitzig gewordenes Dorf"* (St. Ingbert: Röhrig, 2004).

²⁴ See chapter "'(...) und ruh von meinem Vaterlande aus.'" Kurt Tucholsky über Paris und Berlin in den Jahren 1924-1928', in Mayer, *Kurt Tucholsky. Joseph Roth. Walter Mehring*, pp. 223-243.

²⁵ One exception that examines Tucholsky's evocation of Berlin's *Stadtbild* is Ulrike Zitzlsperger's article, 'Kurt Tucholsky: Die entzauberte Stadt', in Warren and Zitzlsperger (eds), *Vienna Meets Berlin*, pp. 139-153.

²⁶ Ujma, 'Gabriele Tergit and Berlin', in Schönfeld and Finnan (eds), *Practicing Modernity*, p. 267.

²⁷ Jan Eik, 'Schauriges Berlin – Kriminalfälle zu Tucholskys Zeiten', in Rottka and Rottka,

certainly displays sympathy for the victims of politics and the justice system, for the working class and homeless population, or, to borrow Susan Sontag's term, the 'human landscape'²⁸ of Berlin, but it is, for the most part, expressed in the form of short political articles or poems. And what appears to be of greater interest to him is the act of drawing attention to contemporary culture and the political apparatus responsible for creating social outsiders in the first place.²⁹ As the seat of government, and what Dördelmann terms a 'Politikschauplatz',³⁰ Berlin was the natural locus of social, political and cultural change as well as conflict. It was a place fought over by left and right-wingers alike, becoming a political space deemed capable of being conquered. In what follows, I explore the complex ways in which Tucholsky essentially spatialises time by focusing on the political aspects of Berlin. I will examine his political *feuilletons* and portraits of quintessentially *berlinisch* characters to address the question of how Tucholsky's view of the capital through the prism of both Germany's provinces and Paris determines his construction, and map, of Weimar Berlin.

5.2 Towards an understanding of Tucholsky's antipathy

Long before political circumstances and personal matters induced him to seek refuge in France in 1924, Tucholsky's *feuilleton* articles rarely conveyed a favourable portrayal of Berlin. Early commentaries, published almost immediately after the war, adopted a critical and sardonic tone when depicting post-war Berlin. Tucholsky was quick to de-mystify the modern city and poke fun at it, availing himself of pre-existing clichés to satirise its exaggerated self-image, its inhabitants and characteristics associated with these.³¹ In 'Berlin! Berlin!' (1919) Tucholsky lists a whole host of negative attributes he deemed peculiar to the city and its residents: Berliners are impatient, cannot listen and

Tucholskys Berlin, pp. 101–112 (p. 102).

²⁸ Susan Sontag, *On Photography* (London: Penguin Books, 1977, repr. 2002), p. 68.

²⁹ See Kurt Tucholsky, 'Deutsche Pleite', in Tucholsky, *GW*, vol. 4, pp. 170–171; 'Monolog mit Chören', in Tucholsky, *GW*, vol. 4, pp. 199–200; 'Wo bleiben deine Steuern –?', in Tucholsky, *GW*, vol. 4, p. 537; 'Asyl für Obdachlose', in Tucholsky, *GW*, vol. 6, pp. 230–231; 'Verfassungsschwindel', in Tucholsky, *GW*, vol. 4, pp. 527–529; 'Nie allein', in Tucholsky, *GW*, vol. 7, pp. 298–299.

³⁰ Dördelmann, 'Die Darstellung Berlins', in Brunn and Reulecke (eds), *Metropolis Berlin*, p. 142.

³¹ For a comprehensive listing of these preconceptions, see Bienert, *Die eingebildete Metropole*, p. 66, p. 67.

are therefore incapable of any form of conversation but superficial exchanges. At the same time, they are obsessed with telephoning or awaiting calls.³² Berliners, he wrote – probably aware that his definition of a Berliner was also a cliché – do not know how to be *alive*, are rude, unfeeling and cold, and hostile towards one another, particularly when sharing public transport: '[sie] knurren sich in der Straße und in den Bahnen an'.³³

Tucholsky tapped into a number of 1920s Berlin topoi by, for example, thematising the contemporary preoccupation with speed – 'zu tun! Zu tun!'³⁴ – and the obsession with business and commerce, which always trumped political idealism and revolutions.³⁵ He also took part in the Berlin discourse of that period about the changing 'face' of the post-war city. 'Das Gesicht der Stadt' from 1920 is a rare article that focuses on Berlin outside a strictly political framework. It addresses issues that were thematised by Tucholsky repeatedly in his writings, including the daily battle fought by Berlin's citizens against the bureaucratic system, which subjugated everybody to its unbendable rules and hardened them as a result: 'Der Kampf des Alltags gräbt sich tief ein – man paukt sich nicht umsonst mit Wohnungsämtern, Hauswirten, Rationierungssystemen und Beamten herum'.³⁶ Further, he writes of the naked capitalist ambitions of all social classes and the subterfuges indulged in by almost everybody, especially those persons least capable of complying with rigid state regulations, be they prostitutes, small shop owners or housewives. Tucholsky also reflects on how the end of the First World War brought about a fundamental shift in Berlin's social composition, with the middle-class becoming polarised: 'Der Mittelstand wird langsam, aber sicher zerrieben – die mühsam

³² Gabriele Tergit also satirises this passion for telephoning – either awaiting phone calls or making them – in her novel, *Käsebier erobert den Kurfürstendamm*, in which predominantly female characters repeatedly promise to phone one another, even when it is obvious that their acquaintance will not develop beyond mere pleasantries, exchanged at incidental meetings. Her *feuilleton* article 'Berliner Bekanntschaft' also alludes to what Tergit perceives as a Berlin phenomenon: meeting the same people over and over again, only to utter empty, hollow phrases. The breakdown of communication between people is a Berlin trope among writers at the time.

³³ Tucholsky 'Berlin! Berlin!', p. 130.

³⁴ Kurt Tucholsky, 'Zu tun! Zu tun!', in Tucholsky, *GW*, vol. 3, pp. 409–410.

³⁵ See Tucholsky's comment: 'Dahinter [the Republic-FM] stand wie eine graue Mauer der farblose Teil des Bürgertums, Kaufleute, die keine andere Sorge kannten als eine Unterbrechung ihrer Geschäftigkeit. "Die 54 geht nicht? Unglaublich!" Das war ihre Anschauung der politischen Lage.' Tucholsky, 'Was wäre, wenn ...?', in Tucholsky, *GW*, vol. 3, pp. 201–206 (p. 206).

³⁶ Kurt Tucholsky, 'Das Gesicht der Stadt', in Tucholsky, *GW*, vol. 2, pp. 436–439 (p. 437).

bewahrte Haltung der Bürgerlichen ist heute schon häufig Tünche, und nach oben und unten wandern sie ab'.³⁷ Some sections of the middle-class, he writes, cling to obsolete notions of privilege but are in fact dissolving, plummeting into poverty as a result of inflation. Others climb the ranks to join the 'Kriegs- und Revolutionsgewinnler'.³⁸ Tucholsky records the hatred on the part of certain segments of the *Bürgertum* towards the proletariat and the close proximity of wealth to destitution in Berlin.³⁹ Meanwhile, the city's geographical orientation was also affected by the war and, according to Tucholsky, was sliding 'immer mehr nach dem Osten'.⁴⁰ With echoes of political rhetoric he notes: 'Diese Kolonialstadt hat sich mit Ostjuden, Polen und Russen überschwemmen lassen müssen'.⁴¹ Tucholsky here categorises Berlin as possessing a human landscape marked by the 'other' but does not examine in any detail whether migration has any tangible effects on the city or its outer appearance, simply remarking about migrants: 'sie verändern Berlin'.⁴²

Tucholsky's early portrayals of city life and Berlin types hold up a mirror to post-war culture and society but were positioned at the rather more frivolous end of his literary spectrum. At the same time, however, the 'Stadtkritik'⁴³ he expressed in these *feuilleton* articles can be read as a more general 'Gesellschaftskritik',⁴⁴ and symptomatic of a larger disquiet about developments taking shape in Germany after the war. This anxiety is most present in his political writings. Here, Berlin with its many facets is frequently used as a metaphorical vehicle: the topic 'Berlin' enabled him to address central concerns regarding socio-cultural and political processes in the Republic during the post-war period. Political circumstances dominate Tucholsky's texts, which are primarily concerned with revealing how war and revolution had done little if anything to alter the mindsets of Germans. Moreover, Tucholsky emphasises

³⁷ Tucholsky, 'Gesicht der Stadt', p. 437.

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ Tucholsky makes an almost identical observation in 'Die beiden Deutschland' (1922), referring to the 'Haß gegen das Proletariat' by the bourgeoisie, a hatred he says is borne of snobbery, class envy and resentment of those not belonging to the same socio-economic rank, 'Die beiden Deutschland', in Tucholsky, *GW*, vol. 3, pp. 253–255 (p. 254).

⁴⁰ Tucholsky, 'Gesicht der Stadt', p. 437.

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ Markus Schroer, *Räume, Orte, Grenzen. Auf dem Weg zu einer Soziologie des Raums* (Frankfurt a. M.: Suhrkamp, 2006), p. 227.

⁴⁴ Schroer, p. 227.

the wasted chances of the years 1918 / 19, and how even the upheavals at the end of the war and the toppling of the Kaiser ‘failed to secure the foundations for a lasting, progressive political system’.⁴⁵ Soon after the end of the First World War, Tucholsky began drawing attention to and criticising Weimar politicians, especially the Social Democratic Party (once the party in opposition, now the leading faction) for being insufficiently courageous to rid the system of its old guard, and put into practice and promote republican, democratic ideals. He consistently accused it of complacency and failing to win over support for the parliamentary system.⁴⁶ In 1922 he was terming the Republic ‘zufällig’⁴⁷ and highlighting the dangers it faced from anti-democratic forces. The article ‘Die Inszenierung der Republik’ (1925) includes Tucholsky’s “recipe” for the founding of a successful Republic, created:

[...] indem ich in die Ämter Republikaner setze, indem ich die republik-feindlichen Richter und Lehrer und Universitätsprofessoren und Verwaltungsbeamten entferne, indem ich nicht den “Fachmann” anbete, der sich farblos gibt und reaktionär arbeitet – indem ich Republikaner schaffe.⁴⁸

Tucholsky was conveying almost identical advice in the late 1920s, stressing how measures fundamental to the Republic’s survival had never been taken in 1918.⁴⁹ As early as 1919 he wrote of the dangers of pro-monarchist forces in the country, cautioning: ‘Der Feind steht rechts!’⁵⁰ His series of short anti-military articles entitled ‘Militaria’ (1919) and ‘Die Reichswehr’ (1922) highlight how the new politicians failed to disband the army proper (and thus reduce the authority of former officers), and instead allow the seeds to be sown for its survival and further growth.⁵¹ Tucholsky’s animosity towards Berlin was, then, if not caused, then at any rate intensified by what he believed was the failure of the November Revolution in 1918 to initiate fundamental political change in Germany.

⁴⁵ Stibbe, p. 2.

⁴⁶ See Mayer, pp. 184–185.

⁴⁷ Kurt Tucholsky, ‘Die Zufällige Republik’, in Tucholsky, *GW*, vol. 3, pp. 219–224 (p. 219).

⁴⁸ Kurt Tucholsky, ‘Die Inszenierung der Republik’, in Tucholsky *GW*, vol. 4, pp. 91–93 (p. 93).

⁴⁹ See Kurt Tucholsky, ‘November-Umsturz’, in Tucholsky, *GW*, vol. 6, pp. 300–301.

⁵⁰ Kurt Tucholsky, ‘Achtundvierzig’, in Tucholsky *GW*, vol. 2, pp. 7–8 (p. 8).

⁵¹ Kurt Tucholsky, ‘Militaria’, in Tucholsky, *GW*, vol. 2, pp. 8–38; ‘Die Reichswehr’, in Tucholsky, *GW*, vol. 3, pp. 134–135.

While Berlin was perceived as synonymous with political disappointment and regarded with increasing dissatisfaction, Tucholsky was nevertheless emphatic in his protection of the city against Germany's forces of reaction in the provinces and accusations in the right-wing press of Berlin's being a bastion of "red" political movement. In 1927 he berated the media tycoon Alfred Hugenberg (owner of right-wing press papers such as *Münchner Neueste Nachrichten*, *Der Tag* and *Berliner Lokal-Anzeiger*) in particular for describing the capital as a 'radikale Lasterhöhle'.⁵² Tucholsky dispelled the customary myth of Berlin as a Babylonian city of sin as early as 1919 in his poem 'Mißachtung der Liebe'. It tells a fictional aunt from the provinces, inflamed by the reputation of 'Sündenbabylon Berlin',⁵³ and 'berliner Scheußlichkeiten',⁵⁴ that the truth about Berlin is rather more prosaic, and the impression of "naughty" Berlin⁵⁵ projected by the city into remote regions far from representative.⁵⁶ Tucholsky advises: 'Bleib nur in deinen bürgerlichen Träumen, du hast hier nämlich gar nichts zu versäumen'.⁵⁷ The poem disapproves equally of high-minded bourgeois morality that borders on the prurient, and of the perception of the capital on the part of the wider public. Tucholsky admits to having his own reservations about Berlin but shields it against the 'Kulturtrottel in allen Orten des Reiches',⁵⁸ before declaring unequivocal support for Berlin and its plurality and diversity, a city 'in der immerhin Bewegung ist und Kraft und pulsierendes rotes Blut. Für Berlin'.⁵⁹

Tucholsky's articles on the German provinces, published throughout the 1920s, perhaps best illustrate his suggestion that there had been no radical

⁵² Tucholsky, 'Berlin! Berlin!', p. 185.

⁵³ Kurt Tucholsky, 'Mißachtung der Liebe', in Tucholsky, *GW*, vol. 2, pp. 189–190 (p. 189).

⁵⁴ Tucholsky 'Mißachtung', p. 189.

⁵⁵ Smith, 'Just How Naughty was Berlin?', in Fisher and Mennel (eds), *Spatial Turns*, p. 68.

⁵⁶ Berlin's reputation as *Sündenbabylon* has a long tradition and is part of its appeal. The concept of the city as decadent and depraved also feeds into the anti-urban narrative that pointed to the corrupting, harmful nature of metropolitan culture in comparison to wholesome provincial life. There was from the turn of the twentieth century onwards a host of literature that informed about all the relevant, more or less scandalous institutions in Berlin. Hans Ostwald, for example, collected contributions by individual writers that provided detail on specific aspects of urban life in Berlin in his *Großstadt-Dokumente*, published between 1904 and 1908. These included homosexual counterculture, prostitution, exorcism, profiteering, and bohemian culture. See Ralf Thies, 'Einleitung', in *Ethnograph des dunklen Berlin: Hans Ostwald und die "Großstadt-Dokumente" 1904-1908* (Cologne: Bröhlau, 2006), pp. 1–5 (p. 2). The city's inhabitants were aware of such publications.

⁵⁷ Tucholsky, 'Mißachtung', p. 190.

⁵⁸ Tucholsky, 'Berlin! Berlin!', p. 188.

⁵⁹ Ibid.

departure from the pre-war and wartime psychology in Germany. Here, Tucholsky exposes the ideological divide between city and the country,⁶⁰ and probes the common 1920s trope 'Wunschbild Land und Schreckbild Stadt'.⁶¹ His analysis of their dialectical relationship can also be read as a literary strategy for the evocation of Berlin: his observations of the provinces are frequently based on comparison and contrast with the city, which has the effect of relativising Berlin. The parochial nature of the provinces, on the one hand, underscores the metropolis's relatively progressive character, highlighting how Berlin was, in Tucholsky's mind, by no means representative of the socio-political climate in the country at large. On the other hand, however, Tucholsky's polemics can hardly be read as straightforward endorsements of Berlin, and a more complex picture emerges.

5.3 Berlin and the Provinces: Spaces in Opposition

Berlin engendered particular hostility in conservative centres of population in Germany. David Midgley explains how, as the seat of government, it was associated with the 'alleged defeatism of civilian politicians at the end of the war'.⁶² Berlin also represented the physical manifestation of modern urbanity, and was linked with social, cultural and political liberalism. Conversely, the provinces, dominated by Wilhelmine morals and resentful towards the new guard, appeared mostly immune to the lure of the post-war metropolitan culture and socio-political changes that heralded a more modern era.⁶³

⁶⁰ The term 'Provinz' equates approximately to 'the country'. Tucholsky distinguished between the province and the 'countryside', which to him denoted landscapes ('Landschaft'). Large parts of Germany's 'Landschaft' were cherished by Tucholsky and he wrote repeatedly of his love for northern Germany's landscapes (see 'Wer kennt Odenwald und Spessart?', in Tucholsky, GW, vol. 6, pp. 117–119; 'Heimat', in Kurt Tucholsky, *Deutschland, Deutschland über alles* (Reinbek bei Hamburg: Rowohlt, 1929, repr. 1980), pp. 226–231).

⁶¹ Erhard Schütz, 'Text der Stadt. Reden von Berlin', in Erhard Schütz and Jörg Döring (eds), *Text der Stadt. Reden von Berlin. Literatur und Metropole seit 1989* (Berlin: Weidler, 1999), pp. 7–15 (p. 8).

⁶² Midgley, p. 263.

⁶³ Matthew Stibbe provides detail on anti-republican feeling towards the Weimar Republic and its capital on the part of provincial society, especially its farming communities. See Stibbe, pp. 117–123. See also David Midgley's chapter 'The City and the Country' on the antagonism between urban and rural life, in Midgley, *Writing Weimar*, pp. 260–303. For literary representations of the outsider perspective of Berlin from the perspective of the (rural) outsider, see the chapter 'Berlin von Außen' in Herbert Günther (ed.) *Hier schreibt Berlin. Eine Anthologie* (Berlin: Fannei & Walz, 1929, repr. 1989), pp. 277–311.

The topic of the provinces as fertile ground for reactionaries was not new to Tucholsky's writings from after the war. Even in 1913 he emphasised how prudery and intolerance towards nudity, sexuality and abortion seemed the preserve of most of provincial Germany: 'Draußen auf dem Land, und in den kleinen, größern und großen Provinzstädten, ist der Bürger von einer verblüffenden Intoleranz'.⁶⁴ Interestingly, this early text still distinguishes between differently sized provincial towns. Later articles do not make such distinctions, nor name specific townships or areas. Tucholsky perhaps felt these to be too homogenous to warrant individual attention. The exception is 'Tante Malchens Heimatland' from 1921, which examines specifically East Prussia's insularity and how forces of reaction work silently towards undermining the Republic in this region.⁶⁵

Tucholsky's articles from the early and late 1920s stress the total absence of a 'geistige Revolution'⁶⁶ in the psyche of many of his compatriots – especially those living in remote areas – after the end of the war and the Revolution. His *feuilleton* from 1919, 'Eindrücke von einer Reise', describes the continued existence of pre-war mentalities and pro-monarchist sympathies among the middle classes in the provinces.⁶⁷ Tucholsky draws particular attention to the provinces' loyalty to the military, which remains absolute, and notes how the passage of time does not automatically signal change in smaller communities:

Die geistige Struktur dieses Bürgertums ist traurig. Sie bewegen sich in den Ausdrucksformen, Ideen, Gedankenkomplexen und auf den Lebensgrundlagen ungefähr einer Opportunitätsphilosophie der achtziger Jahre des vorigen Jahrhunderts.⁶⁸

Revolutionary fervour and a new political system cause little transformation away from larger centres of industry and culture. 'In der Provinz' from 1920 reiterates this, stating that Berlin is not without its faults, 'aber in politischer

⁶⁴ Kurt Tucholsky, 'Laster und Liebe', in Tucholsky, *GW*, vol. 1, pp. 135–137 (p. 136).

⁶⁵ Kurt Tucholsky, 'Tante Malchens Heimatland', in Tucholsky, *GW*, vol. 3, pp. 69–73.

⁶⁶ Kurt Tucholsky, 'Militaria', in Tucholsky, *GW*, vol. 1, pp. 328–358 (p. 358).

⁶⁷ Gabriele Tergit's *feuilleton* 'Abenteuer in K...titz' describes similar scenes of pro-monarchist sympathies in provincial towns, evident here in a statue of 'Kaiser Wilhelm in Bronze'. Tergit's café scene also conveys the essential difference between herself, an urbanite, and the local citizens, who appear like characters from another era: 'Alte Damen im schwarzen Umhang und Kapotthut machen Handarbeit. Alte Herren, das Augenglas auf der Nasenspitze, spielen Tarock'. See Tergit, 'Abenteuer in K...titz', in *Atem*, pp. 41–43 (p. 42). In the writings of Tucholsky and Roth, and the caricatures by Georg Grosz and Karl Arnold, the eyeglass or monocle signified reactionary voices in society.

⁶⁸ Kurt Tucholsky, 'Eindrücke von einer Reise', in Tucholsky, *GW*, vol. 1, pp. 175–179 (p. 177).

Beziehung ist es ein Paradies gegen die kleinen deutschen Mittelstände [...]. Da schlägt die Uhr noch 1890 – und will nicht vorwärtsgehen'.⁶⁹

Tucholsky's emphasis on the times not having changed in the provinces essentially increases the distance – spatial and mental – between the country and the city. Doreen Massey describes how 'spatial difference'⁷⁰ in the past has been (and is sometimes still) 'convened into temporal sequence'.⁷¹ Tucholsky perceives the provinces and Berlin to be in what Massey terms as 'different stages in a single temporal development'.⁷² He makes reference to differentiations in temporal perceptions especially in the context of the city–provinces dichotomy. Just as persons can be 'Kleinstädter'⁷³ – confined to a place that defines them – so-called 'Kleinzeitler'⁷⁴ can be equally biased, but in regard to time rather than place. The 'Kleinzeitler' do not recognise the contemporaneous existence of different temporal 'regions', but tend to privilege *their* epoch, and their experience of the here and now. The term 'heute', Tucholsky notes, has a tendency to creep into bourgeois laments about the age they were living through, a sentiment that was frequently in danger of spilling over into nostalgia for the pre-modern era, 'die gute alte Zeit'.⁷⁵ The city is, by implication, more temporally heterogeneous; time is transitional and not fixed, and large cities have the potential to reveal 'die Parallelität des Alten und Neuen in stärkeren Kontrasten'.⁷⁶ Tucholsky conflates the concepts of 'Kleinstädter' and 'Kleinzeitler' to denote identically rigid mindsets:

Kleinstädter sind unduldsamer, härter, unnachgiebiger als die Leute in der City. Kleinstädter [...] halten zäh fest an dem, was sie einmal für richtig erkannt haben, und lassen nichts außerhalb ihrer Mauern

⁶⁹ Kurt Tucholsky, 'In der Provinz', in Tucholsky, *GW*, vol. 2, pp. 327–330 (p. 328).

⁷⁰ Doreen Massey, *For Space* (London: Sage, 2005), p. 68.

⁷¹ Massey, p. 68. Massey states this in the context of how space was conceived during the era of modernity, when it was thought to be 'divided into bounded places [...]'. She notes how different countries in the world have been interpreted as developing at different speeds. The concepts of 'lagging behind' the 'developed' western world implied that progress was 'unilinear', and other countries would eventually catch up or forever be behind, or even 'backwards'. This interpretation did not allow for the concept of difference, or of spatial and temporal heterogeneity. Massey, p. 68.

⁷² Massey, p. 68.

⁷³ Kurt Tucholsky, 'Die Zeit', in Tucholsky, *GW*, vol. 8, pp. 53–56 (p. 54).

⁷⁴ Tucholsky, 'Die Zeit', p. 54.

⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁶ Zitzlsperger, 'Die entzauberte Stadt', in Warren and Zitzlsperger (eds), *Vienna meets Berlin*, p. 152.

gelten. Kleinzeitler desgleichen. Befangen sind sie im Wahn ihrer alleinseligmachenden Zeit.⁷⁷

Ernst Bloch (1885–1977) engaged with the idea of contrasting temporal developments in the early 1930s, famously coining the term ‘Ungleichzeitigkeit’⁷⁸ in reference to the coexistence of old-fashioned beliefs alongside more modern thinking. He wrote in 1932: ‘Nicht alle sind im selben Jetzt da. Sie sind es nur äußerlich, dadurch, daß sie heute zu sehen sind. Damit aber leben sie noch nicht mit den andern zugleich.’⁷⁹

Temporal references come to the fore in numerous texts by Tucholsky, who as early as 1912 wrote about ‘das ungeheure Wunder der Gleichzeitigkeit’,⁸⁰ and reflected on the marvel of disparate activities taking place globally, concurrently, ‘alles, während du frühstückst’.⁸¹ Elsewhere, the motif of time is used to express the vast differences between places in terms of political attitudes and nature of the respective societies. Mental distance, Tucholsky states, is much greater than physical distance, and the time it takes to travel between cities by rail is not a reliable indicator of converging viewpoints. Concerning East Prussia, for example, Tucholsky writes in a spatial-temporal metaphor: ‘Königsberg war schon im Frieden viel weiter als die vierzehn Bahnstunden von Berlin entfernt’.⁸² In 1928, Berlin is subject to a similarly severe judgement when compared to Paris and *its* generally liberal stance: ‘Es ist so weit von Berlin nach Paris! Viel viel weiter als zwanzig Stunden Bahnfahrt.’⁸³

⁷⁷ Kurt Tucholsky, ‘Das Zeitdorf’, in *Gesammelte Schriften. Glossen und Essays 1907–1935* <<http://www.textlog.de/tucholsky-das-zeitdorf.html>> [accessed 10 May 2011]

⁷⁸ Bloch’s comment refers to his attempt to explain the rise of National Socialism in Germany. His theory of ‘Ungleichzeitigkeit’ relates to the different stages of progress undergone by sectors of society during the modern era. Bloch argued that, in Germany, the failure of society to revolutionise and modernise (in 1848 and 1918) resulted in the survival of outmoded mindsets alongside new, progressive attitudes. The Nazis, he argued, exploited both the resentment felt by many sections of society towards modernity (and its attendant features: rationality and technological advance) as well as their ‘Rückständigkeit’. See Ernst Bloch, *Erbschaft dieser Zeit* (Frankfurt a. M.: Suhrkamp, 1985), pp. 104–126.

⁷⁹ Bloch, *Erbschaft*, p. 104.

⁸⁰ Kurt Tucholsky, ‘Gleichzeitigkeit’, in Bärbel Boldt, Dirk Grathoff and Michael Hepp (eds), *Kurt Tucholsky. Gesamtausgabe*, vol. 1 (Reinbek bei Hamburg: Rowohlt, 1997), pp. 74–75 (p. 74).

⁸¹ Tucholsky, ‘Gleichzeitigkeit’, p. 75.

⁸² Kurt Tucholsky, ‘Tante Malchen’, p. 70.

⁸³ Kurt Tucholsky, ‘Der Mann, der ein Kind ertränkt’, in Tucholsky, *GW*, vol. 6, pp. 291–295 (p. 294).

The German revolution, Tucholsky writes, is an unpopular topic of conversation in the provinces, and elicits little if any reaction. Tucholsky, like Roth,⁸⁴ in fact challenged the very concept of a revolution having happened at all, and alerts the readership in a number of articles to the *non*-revolution in evidence in many corners of the country. For example, 'In der Provinz' points out the rejection of the revolution by the provinces: 'Hier war keine Kriegserkenntnis – hier war keine Revolution'.⁸⁵ His essay 'Kapp-Lüttwitz' (1920) ends on the line: 'Wir haben keine Revolution gehabt',⁸⁶ whilst 'Der Schnellmaler'⁸⁷ and 'Noch immer', both from 1919, refer to the continued existence of politicians in their former positions of power and scant evidence of reforms in schools, administration, and the legal system. Tucholsky declares: 'Es ist alles beim alten'.⁸⁸ Moreover, the provinces are continually depicted as places that are in conflict with Berlin. Early texts identify the 'Abneigung'⁸⁹ towards the capital as being part envy, part refusal on the part of the provinces to conform to new political and social conventions. Above all, they were disdainful of what they perceived as the political and cultural hegemony of Berlin. Midgley notes that 'in the mid-1920s, Berlin was accused in the pages of the radical conservative journal *Deutsches Volkstum* [...] of 'active "provincialization", in the sense of subjugating other regions of Germany to its own cultural trends'.⁹⁰ The provinces were, however, more than able to defend themselves against cultural exports from Berlin that they judged to be too ultra-modern and non-conformist. Tucholsky refers to the Bauhaus modernist school of arts and crafts as an example of how cultural institutions were often the targets of indignation. Reliant on funding by the region, these were often predestined to failure once political control of state governments passed from the hands of social democrats into those of right-wingers:

Im Augenblick, wo eine künstlerische Institution von den Kommunalbehörden in der Provinz oder Landesbehörden in der Provinz abhängt, ist es mit ihr aus: sie gerät widerstandslos in den

⁸⁴ See Joseph Roth, 'Kaisers Geburtstag', in *Werke*, vol. 2, pp. 335–337 (p. 336).

⁸⁵ Tucholsky, 'In der Provinz', p. 329.

⁸⁶ Kurt Tucholsky, 'Kapp-Lüttwitz', in Tucholsky, *GW*, vol. 2, pp. 294–301 (p. 301).

⁸⁷ Kurt Tucholsky, 'Der Schnellmaler', in Tucholsky, *GW*, vol. 2, pp. 103–105.

⁸⁸ Kurt Tucholsky, 'Noch immer', in Tucholsky, *GW*, vol. 2, pp. 128–129 (p. 128).

⁸⁹ Tucholsky, 'Tante Malchen', p. 69.

⁹⁰ Midgley, *Writing Weimar*, p. 264.

reaktionären Muff engstirniger Kleinbürger; freiheitliche Männer werden gekündigt, herausgeekelt, herausgeworfen [...].⁹¹

Besides cuts to subsidies by conservative governments, Weimar culture suffered further difficulties during economic crisis points (1923 and 1929). Cultural centres, even those fronted by left-wing sympathisers, yielded to pressure from bourgeois moralists to abandon more audacious ventures in troubled times and endorse 'mainstream' cultural offerings.⁹²

The illiberal provincial, Tucholsky writes, remains firmly in charge, and largely loyal to established orders. Former figures of authority continued to reign: 'Da regiert der Bürger in seiner übelsten Gestalt. Da regiert der Offizier alten Stils. Da regiert der Beamte des alten Regimes. Und wie regieren sie!'⁹³ Strict social hierarchies remained in place, with the affluent exulting in their perceived superiority, while officials maintained their dominance and continued to victimise: '[...] das können deutsche Verwaltungsbeamte: schikanieren! Darin sind sie ganz unbestechlich'.⁹⁴ The provinces' charge 'das berliner Getöse sei nicht Deutschland'⁹⁵ suggests that they regarded themselves as more 'authentically' German than *Babel* Berlin. This self-perception in turn rationalised the exclusion of groups that did not endorse conservative values and the dismissal of them as Bolsheviks: 'jeder, der nicht konservativ ist, [wird] als Bolschewist angerüpelt [...]'.⁹⁶ Inclusive and exclusive behaviour was the norm, and the provinces, according to Tucholsky, hated Berlin because it signified relative equality, fewer occupational divisions and thus less class prejudice in society:

Berlin – das heißt: in mancher Hinsicht sind alle gleich. Berlin – das heißt: das Einkommen entscheidet nicht über den Wert, die Geburt nicht über die Tüchtigkeit des Charakters. Berlin – das heißt: Vorgesetztendämmerung. Sie hassen Berlin.⁹⁷

Tucholsky accentuates how the provinces consider themselves apart from Berlin and the revolution; they play by their own rules, and flout constitutional

⁹¹ Tucholsky, 'Tante Malchen', p. 71.

⁹² See Stibbe, p. 137, p. 138.

⁹³ Tucholsky, 'In der Provinz', p. 327.

⁹⁴ Tucholsky, 'In der Provinz', p. 328.

⁹⁵ Kurt Tucholsky, 'Berlin und die Provinz', in Tucholsky, *GW*, vol. 6, pp. 70–73 (p. 73).

⁹⁶ Tucholsky, 'In der Provinz', p. 329.

⁹⁷ Tucholsky, 'In der Provinz', p. 329.

laws set down by the government – ‘Für sie gilt das alles nicht’.⁹⁸ Tucholsky’s *feuilleton* ‘Das leere Schloß’ (1919) describes the weakness of the Republican government in the face of the provinces, whose continued particularist stance, resisting the ‘central direction from Berlin’,⁹⁹ hindered efforts to establish the basis for a democracy. The title of the article refers to Berlin’s Stadtschloss, or palace, the former residence of the Kaiser, standing empty since the end of the war in 1918. The new politicians, instead of inhabiting the palace, govern from the Wilhelmstraße, situated south of Unter den Linden, which soon became the governmental administrative centre. Tucholsky perceived this voluntary retirement to less distinguished quarters as emblematic of the lack of conviction with which the government assumed power and set about ridding politics of ‘die allerschlimmsten Säulen des Regimes’,¹⁰⁰ the monarchists and reactionaries. Republican politicians failed to appropriate the Schloss and alter its symbolism. Instead, it remained a powerful representative of past times. Governing from Wilhelmstraße and leaving the palace as a focus for those mourning the Kaiser undermined Weimar politicians’ attempts at establishing political legitimacy. Tucholsky’s criticism echoes Roth’s observations of politicians entering the Reichstag through a nondescript entrance, and how this also symbolised a lack of confidence in the new political processes of the Republic.

Meanwhile, the provinces cared little for laws established by Republicans: ‘In der Wilhelmstraße zu Berlin sitzen, den größten Teil des Jahres durch Stacheldrahtverhaue geschützt, ein paar Männer; alle Provinzen lachen darüber und machen, was sie wollen. Und das ist nichts Gutes.’¹⁰¹ Tucholsky attacks the arrogance of these acts of deliberate ‘Obstruktion’,¹⁰² and what he perceives as the dark, regressive orientation of the provinces. He accuses Berlin – and the representatives of the Republic – of being too self-absorbed to realise the extent of the political sabotage by the provinces, facilitated by a flourishing ‘local press, which had a wider circulation than the national newspapers’.¹⁰³ In the same article Tucholsky draws attention to the

⁹⁸ Tucholsky, ‘In der Provinz’, p. 329.

⁹⁹ Stibbe, p. 45.

¹⁰⁰ Kurt Tucholsky, ‘Das leere Schloß’, in Tucholsky, *GW*, vol. 2, pp. 278–283 (p. 279).

¹⁰¹ Tucholsky, ‘Schloß’, p. 279.

¹⁰² Tucholsky, ‘Schloß’, p. 279.

¹⁰³ Stibbe, p. 103.

entrenched prejudice and anti-Semitism in smaller communities by referring to a letter sent to him in confidence by a former officer, who tells of the 'Judenhetze'¹⁰⁴ by reactionaries in Hannover, Niedersachsen. The officer describes scenes of violence committed by nationalists against Jews as a premeditated 'Offensive gegen die Republik [...]'.¹⁰⁵ He goes on to comment: 'Vielleicht ist in Berlin die Gefahr noch nicht als so groß erschienen, aber wir hier in der Provinz, wir haben einen sichern [*sic*] Blick dafür. Hat Berlin die Monarchie geschmissen, nun, so schmeißt die Provinz die Republik.'¹⁰⁶

Tucholsky makes repeated reference during the 1920s to the task facing Berlin in attempting to counteract provincial bigotry. In his articles this typically takes the form of images of light and darkness, and the spatial metaphors of the 'centre' versus 'the margins': Berlin represents a bright 'educating' focal point, and Tucholsky regarded it as the capital's duty to radiate some of its glow outward into the provinces – 'da draußen in der Provinz'¹⁰⁷ – where the sun, and by implication, fresh ideas, do not penetrate.¹⁰⁸ In 1920 he wrote: 'In diese Städte scheint keine Sonne. In jeder steht der bürgerliche Ordnungsblock fest und treu zusammen, wenn es heißt: gegen den Fortschritt'.¹⁰⁹ In later articles Tucholsky entreats the city to spread its enlightening influence: 'heraus mit der Kraft Berlins, das helle ist, in die Provinz, wo sie dunkel ist'.¹¹⁰ The metaphorical deficiency of light in the provinces signifies not only their obscurity but also the sense of their being cold and inimical to life. In his article 'Provinz' from 1929, Tucholsky exhorts the younger generation of left-wing supporters to travel from Berlin to the provinces and aid the dissemination of progressive values, a cultural and political process. He stresses their potential to end the tendency by provincial communities to associate Berlin with radicalism and moral dissolution, and thus confirm prejudices held about the capital ('Bei uns in Greifswald gibts so etwas nicht').¹¹¹ If young people could effect direct change in the provinces, Berlin would cease to be exceptional. Tucholsky also

¹⁰⁴ Tucholsky, 'Schloß', p. 281.

¹⁰⁵ Tucholsky, 'Schloß', p. 282.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid.

¹⁰⁷ Tucholsky, 'In der Provinz', p. 330.

¹⁰⁸ See Tucholsky, 'In der Provinz', p. 327: 'Kein Luftzug einer neuen Zeit weht da herein'.

¹⁰⁹ Tucholsky, 'In der Provinz', p. 329.

¹¹⁰ Tucholsky, 'Berlin und die Provinz', p. 73.

¹¹¹ Kurt Tucholsky, 'Provinz', in Tucholsky, *GW*, vol. 7, pp. 72–76 (p. 75).

emphasises how, without cultural and political impulses emanating from liberal minds *within* the provinces, it was likely to decay. He thus condemns the ‘escape’ to Berlin from smaller towns and cities by influential cultural figures who had the potential to be agents of change in the provinces. Intellectuals – Heinrich Mann is named as an example – ought to remain in Munich, Stuttgart or Königsberg, and exert influence from inside, rather than defect to Berlin, a move that Tucholsky judged to be ‘Fahnenflucht’.¹¹²

While Tucholsky’s *feuilletons* convey hope in the capital as what Ulrike Zitzlsperger terms a ‘Hoffnungsträger und Kulturbringer’,¹¹³ his confidence began to diminish towards the end of the 1920s. He persisted in stating Berlin’s obligation to regional communities (‘Berlin hat eine Schuld an die Provinz – wir sollten ans Werk gehen’),¹¹⁴ but voices misgivings about the city in the role as ‘civilizer’ of the nation. His understanding of Berlin as centre and its relationship to the margins – the provinces – becomes more complex. In 1928, for instance, he cautions newspaper columnists against condescension towards the provinces with the use of the phrase “draußen im Lande”¹¹⁵ (one used by Tucholsky himself in 1913 and later articles). The implication – that Berlin was in some way representative of Germany and everything else ‘out in the country’ remote – is, he says, pure conceit and ‘eine groteske Überschätzung der Hauptstadt’.¹¹⁶ By 1932 Tucholsky avoids the use of the term ‘Provinz’ entirely, explaining: ‘es hat so einen Nebenklang, als ob Berlin der Nabel der Welt sei, und es schließt eine törichte Verachtung des Eigenlebens deutscher Landschaften ein, kurz: es ist genauso dumm wie das Gekläff gegen Berlin’.¹¹⁷ The binary of inside [Berlin] and outside [provinces] thus falls apart, and the act of associating the homogenous margins with otherness, and the centre with heterogeneity and dynamism appears invalid. Instead, ‘away from the city’ – towns, villages and other geographically rural areas – was more

¹¹² Tucholsky, ‘Provinz’, p. 73.

¹¹³ Zitzlsperger, ‘Die entzauberte Stadt’, in Warren and Zitzlsperger (eds), *Vienna meets Berlin*, p. 145.

¹¹⁴ Tucholsky, ‘Provinz’, p. 75.

¹¹⁵ Tucholsky, ‘Berlin und die Provinz’, p. 70.

¹¹⁶ Ibid.

¹¹⁷ Kurt Tucholsky, ‘Die deutschen Kleinstädter’, in *Gesammelte Schriften. Glossen und Essays 1907–1935* <<http://www.textlog.de/tucholsky-kleinstaedter.html>> [accessed 11 May 2011]

representative of Germany: 'Da sitzen letzten Endes die Massen'.¹¹⁸ The provinces, he adds, were more likely than Berlin to embody 'Niveau, Basis und Fundament Deutschlands'.¹¹⁹ With this re-evaluation in mind, he queries to what extent Berlin exerts any influence over the provinces. The answer appears to be: very little indeed. Tucholsky argues that, whilst Berlin has passed on some positive as well as lesser progressive traits, including 'die Bar, das dumme Revue-Theater, de[n] Amüsier-Betrieb; die "Aufmachung"',¹²⁰ the capital's self-importance is misguided, and provincial towns are generally autonomous and thriving, wholly separate, geographically *and* mentally from Berlin and its politics.

5.4 The Provinces in Berlin

Tucholsky's writings on the provinces generally produce an image of opposing spaces: Berlin was depicted as a dynamic centre with potential for change – the aforementioned 'Bewegung [...] und Kraft'.¹²¹ It is defined as a space associated with progressive politics, culture and 'civilisation', which it had the capacity to extend into peripheral regions. The provinces, on the other hand, represented stasis, anti-urbanism and the continuation of Wilhelmine militarism. On the margins, they seemed resistant to democratic society. The division into contrasting forces has the effect of politicising the two spaces, as they represent distinct ideologies at variance with one another. However, Tucholsky avoided the automatic response of linking 'the city categorically with the forces of modernism and the provinces with those of reaction'.¹²² In 1920, for instance, his article 'In der Provinz' highlights and applauds the presence 'da draußen im schwarzen Erdteil',¹²³ that is, in the provinces, of a pro-Republican opposition which worked with quiet determination and little reward against 'die Macht der Reaktion'.¹²⁴ and for 'Licht und Luft und Freiheit'.¹²⁵ At the same time, Tucholsky's writings undermine the impression of Berlin as an inherently liberal

¹¹⁸ Tucholsky, 'In der Provinz', p. 329.

¹¹⁹ Tucholsky, 'Berlin und die Provinz', p. 70.

¹²⁰ Ibid.

¹²¹ Tucholsky, 'Berlin! Berlin!', p. 188.

¹²² Midgley, *Writing Weimar*, p. 263.

¹²³ Tucholsky, 'In der Provinz', p. 330.

¹²⁴ Tucholsky, 'Berlin und die Provinz', p. 73.

¹²⁵ Ibid.

metropolis, free from small-town conservatism. Instead, he notes with cynicism in 1928 that Berlin is 'nur eine große Stadt',¹²⁶ and reveals how especially 'embedded power relations'¹²⁷ in Berlin hardly differed from those present in the provinces: the pre-conditions for joining the ranks of decision makers are the same, and identical petty-minded bureaucrats occupy the powerful positions:

Man gehe einmal dahin, wo wirklich eine Macht ausgeübt wird: in die Baupolizei, aufs Gericht, in die Schule – und man wird, von zahlreichen freiheitlichen Enklaven abgesehen, auf einen Provinzsumpf stoßen, auf Vorurteile gradezu diluvialer Art, auf unwahrscheinliche Typen, die der Beamtenkörper durch Kooptation aufgenommen hat und die in ihm herrlich gedeihen.¹²⁸

The singular difference between the provinces and the city is that, in the capital, the numbers of such types swelled by many hundreds. Tucholsky identifies in further texts the existence of similarly parochial characteristics in the capital city and in the provinces: Berlin, he writes in 'Die Parole' (1927), always had a penchant for following specific trends, which preoccupied the entire city at any one time. As stated above, he thematised the affectations of Berlin in numerous articles during the 1920s, repeatedly disparaging the city's mercurial character and its pointless pursuit of 'das nächste Ding',¹²⁹ a trait that he believed signified 'die Provinzhaftigkeit der Stadt'.¹³⁰ Tucholsky adduced Berlin's geographical situation, isolated from 'den großen Straßen der Welt [...]',¹³¹ as the reason for the practice of chasing fads simply for the sake of it, noting: 'sie [macht] sich Sensationen, wenn sie keine hat'.¹³² He also judged Berliners to be insular and self-centred,¹³³ and too absorbed in the pretence of being 'Klein-New York'¹³⁴ to realise that, in so doing, they exposed their own

¹²⁶ Tucholsky, 'Berlin und die Provinz', p. 72.

¹²⁷ Massey, p. 93.

¹²⁸ Tucholsky, 'Berlin und die Provinz', p. 72.

¹²⁹ Kurt Tucholsky, 'Berliner Geschäfte', in Tucholsky, *GW*, vol. 8, pp. 341–344. See also 'Ein Deutschland-Buch', in Tucholsky, *GW*, vol. 8, pp. 222–229. In his review of Eugen Diesel's publication *Die deutsche Wandlung. Das Bild eines Volks*, Tucholsky concurs with Diesel and his assessment of Berlin that 'sein Wesen und Stolz [...] immer nur wieder darin [besteht], daß hier, um des Losseins willen, etwas los sei, gar nicht eigentlich im sensationellen Sinn, sondern im Sinn einer Beweglichkeit', p. 224.

¹³⁰ Kurt Tucholsky, 'Die Parole', in Tucholsky, *GW*, vol. 5, pp. 138–141 (p. 138).

¹³¹ Tucholsky, 'Parole', p. 138.

¹³² *Ibid.*

¹³³ It is probably safe to assume that Tucholsky's collective noun 'Berliner' does not refer to the city's poor and struggling population, but rather to the social group he terms 'Bürger': the well-heeled middle-classes.

¹³⁴ Kurt Tucholsky, 'Auf dem Nachttisch', in Tucholsky, *GW*, vol. 7, pp. 43–49 (p. 47).

provincialism.¹³⁵ Berlin's boulevard Kurfürstendamm and the area of Spittelmarkt recur in Tucholsky's *feuilletons* as urban areas frequently associated with the acutely narrow window some Berliners had on the world around them.¹³⁶ Similar to the ways in which Roth perceived Kurfürstendamm as the reflection of shallow values of a consumer society and ignorance of the harsher sides of life, Tucholsky condemned Berliners for regarding the boulevard as 'die Welt'.¹³⁷ It was representative of what he called 'ewig abgelenkte[s] Berlin'.¹³⁸ The collective city was, in Tucholsky's belief, too preoccupied with itself to recognise how a 'provincial and brutally pernicious ideology'¹³⁹ had been gradually creeping into Berlin. Tucholsky attacks the public's complacency towards nationalistic provocation in 'Die deutsche Pest' (1930), arguing that their arrogance was directly attributable to the 'berliner Aberglauben, der Kurfürstendamm sei die Welt.' And 'solange eine Reinhardt-Premiere nicht gestört würde, könne das Ganze doch unmöglich so schlimm sein'.¹⁴⁰

By 1927 Tucholsky was more specific in locating provincial, anti-republican feeling in Berlin. His *feuilleton* 'Stahlhelm oder Filzhut?' tells of how 'ein paar abgetakelte Offiziere'¹⁴¹ sporting steel helmets staged a march on Berlin. It quickly foundered owing to the total apathy of the majority of Berliners. Accustomed to many attempted coups and street fights over the years, they preferred to venture into nature to avoid the 'Klamauk, den wir hier bis zum Überdruß auswendig gelernt haben'.¹⁴² Tucholsky highlights, however, how the officers' demonstration of Wilhelmine military spirit was met with enthusiasm by

¹³⁵ In 1931, Tucholsky universalises his observation about Berlin's self-importance and small-town mentality and applies it to the whole of Germany, stating: 'Da ist nun Deutschland, ein Land, das sich für alles interessiert, was in der Welt vorgeht, und ist doch eine Provinz geblieben, trotz allem: Provinz Deutschland.' He then adds: 'Deutschland spielt in der Welt nicht die Rolle, die es zu spielen glaubt.' See Kurt Tucholsky, 'Die Augen der Welt', in Tucholsky, *GW*, vol. 9, pp. 255–259 (p. 255, p. 256).

¹³⁶ See Kurt Tucholsky, 'Berliner auf Reisen', in Tucholsky, *GW*, vol. 4, pp. 324–326 (p. 326): '[...] auf Reisen sieht der Berliner nicht über den Spittelmarkt'.

¹³⁷ Kurt Tucholsky, 'Die deutsche Pest', in Tucholsky, *GW*, vol. 8, pp. 129–133 (p. 133).

¹³⁸ Tucholsky, 'Provinz', p. 74.

¹³⁹ Efraim Frisch, 'Berlin-Paris', quoted in Schütz, 'Beyond Glittering Reflections', in Kniesche and Brockmann (eds), *Dancing on the Volcano*, p. 125.

¹⁴⁰ Kurt Tucholsky, 'Die deutsche Pest', p. 133. See also Tucholsky's 'Der Fall Röttcher' (1927): 'Autobesitzer vom Kurfürstendamm, den er für die Welt hält [...]', in Tucholsky, *GW*, vol. 5, pp. 391–397 (p. 396).

¹⁴¹ Kurt Tucholsky, 'Stahlhelm oder Filzhut?', in Tucholsky, *GW*, vol. 5, pp. 217–220 (p. 217).

¹⁴² Tucholsky, 'Stahlhelm', p. 217.

some inhabitants of West Berlin's suburbs: 'Was dem Stahlhelm zujubelte, wohnte meistens in den westlichen Vororten Berlins, in Friedenau, in Lichterfelde, in dem grauslichen Steglitz'.¹⁴³ Just as Roth depicted certain urban areas as closely intertwined with militarism and antiquated mindsets, Kurt Tucholsky also identifies specific districts of Berlin as right wing, nationalistic milieus. These were the materialisation of a political ideology, thus illustrating how politics – in Berlin as in the provinces – is mirrored in geography. Tucholsky also spatialises politics in the articles 'Proteste gegen die Dreigroschenoper' (1930) and 'Die Inszenierung der Republik'. The former reports on the derision that greeted Bertolt Brecht's musical in many of Germany's provincial towns. The hecklers' right-wing political orientation is referred to as the "rechte" Seite' ('Wer Radau macht, ist gewöhnlich die "rechte" Seite der Stadt').¹⁴⁴ In 'Die Inszenierung der Republik', Tucholsky criticises the lack of positive propaganda disseminated on behalf of the Republic by politicians who, lacking respect for it, fail to demonstrate their commitment to its welfare. The Republic, he notes, betrays no outward signs of being a democratic institution, which in turn reflects the political apathy of its representatives: 'Der Mangel an republikanischen Äußerlichkeiten entspricht politischer Tatkraft nach innen'.¹⁴⁵ Tucholsky indicates that affiliation with a political regime finds external expression in physical actions, and he highlights how especially Germany's small towns openly publicised their Wilhelmine sympathies in every 'kaiserliche Parade' and 'jede Straßenbenennung'.¹⁴⁶ The latter deed of naming streets involves the appropriation of space, since street names, though intrinsically unstable, assign meaning by evoking a particular heritage; they draw attention to what Aleida Assmann refers to as 'Geschichte im Raum'.¹⁴⁷ Street signs also shape and form part of the official political landscape, as the act of naming a road usually involves political decision-making. Tucholsky concedes that the mere naming of a street after a democratic minister will hardly engender sudden changes in political attitude

¹⁴³ Tucholsky, 'Stahlhelm', p. 218.

¹⁴⁴ Kurt Tucholsky, 'Proteste gegen die Dreigroschenoper', in Tucholsky, *GW*, vol. 8, pp. 105–106 (p. 105).

¹⁴⁵ Tucholsky, 'Die Inszenierung', p. 92.

¹⁴⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁴⁷ Assmann, 'Geschichte findet Stadt', in Csáky and Leitgeb (eds), *Kommunikation. Gedächtnis. Raum*, p. 22.

among anti-republicans. However, he suggests that propaganda for the Republic begins in small “psychological” acts, including external gestures of support and law-making that can, potentially, filter down and alter existing mentalities and perceptions of everyday environments.

A key figure in Tucholsky’s Berlin rhetoric is his literary creation Herr Wendriner, who personifies most aptly the small-town mentality that Tucholsky came to diagnose among Berliners.¹⁴⁸ Herr Wendriner is a self-centred, loquacious character who – impatient and always in the right – complains incessantly and provides his imagined opposite with little opportunity for riposte.¹⁴⁹ Devised as a means of criticising this particular mindset, the sixteen Wendriner texts were published by Tucholsky between 1922 and 1930, and describe the parsimonious Berlin businessman in a number of routine situations. By way of extended meandering monologues, during which he speaks *at* people, Herr Wendriner exposes himself as ‘ein Mann mit schlechten Manieren, aufgeschnappten Bildungsbrocken, größter Angst vor Leuten, die auf der Straße singen, denn sie könnten Kommunisten sein’.¹⁵⁰ At home in Berlin-West, Wendriner displays all the hallmarks of the blinkered Berliner who regarded the Kurfürstendamm as the centre of all goings-on, cultural or political in nature (referring to the 1929 Wall Street crash, he claims: ‘Man hat doch hier am Kurfürstendamm vorher gar nichts gesehen’).¹⁵¹ Wendriner is concerned primarily with business, talk of which is continuously interwoven with details of his private life. Whether on holiday at the seaside, preparing for bed or attending a funeral, Wendriner is always focused on his trade, a trait he nevertheless deplores in others. The article ‘Herr Wendriner telefoniert’ satirises his preoccupation with material interest. On the day of the funeral of the murdered foreign minister, Walther Rathenau, businesses closed for a ten-minute period as a mark of respect. Herr Wendriner, initially sympathetic, eventually loses his temper:

¹⁴⁸ Alongside Herr Wendriner, Tucholsky also created the figure of Lottchen, another representative of the selfish, bourgeois Berliner. I opted to examine Herr Wendriner closely because his monologues appear more apt in revealing a particular Berlin mindset that was perhaps more widespread than Lottchen’s self-absorbed chatter.

¹⁴⁹ Though his stance is arguably typical of the time, Herr Wendriner can be regarded as quite timeless and as a type he is instantly recognisable.

¹⁵⁰ Kähler, p. 60.

¹⁵¹ Kurt Tucholsky, ‘Herr Wendriner steht unter der Diktatur’, in Tucholsky, *GW*, vol. 8, pp. 237–240 (p. 237).

Was sind das für Sachen, einem am hellerlichten [*sic*] Tage das Telefon vor der Nase abzusperren! Unterm Kaiser sind doch gewiß manche Sachen vorgekommen – aber so was hab ich noch nicht erlebt! Unerhört! Das ist eine Belästigung der Öffentlichkeit! Solln se sich totschießen oder nicht – aber bis ins Geschäft darf das doch nicht gehn!¹⁵²

Street battles between political camps (not infrequently resulting in deaths) were a regular feature of everyday life, and seem of little concern to Wendriner. Neither does the murder of Rathenau elicit sufficient empathy on the part of Wendriner to bring his business to a temporary halt. His interests come ahead of others' — and politics.

Wendriner is a caricature, and represents the more unnerving aspects of Berlin and the Republic in terms of social mores and political attitudes. Wendriner's apparent indifference to politics, for example – 'Ich lese keine Politik. Nee, wissen Se, grundsätzlich nicht. Man hat ja nichts wie Ärger davon'¹⁵³ –, masks a relatively defined political stance, which discredits the existing Republic ('Mich kann die ganze Republik ...'),¹⁵⁴ and elevates the former monarchy. Wendriner reassesses the Wilhelminian era as 'gar nicht so schlecht'¹⁵⁵ and expresses casual approval of the regrouping and remobilisation of the German navy: 'Sehn Se mal, das Schiff da hinten. Ein Kriegsschiff? Glaub ich nicht! Na, wenn schon. Was meinen Sie, wie nötig braucht Deutschland eine Kriegsflotte.'¹⁵⁶ A braggart, with conformist tastes in art that echo those of Kaiser Wilhelm II ('von der modernen Kunst halt ich nichts'),¹⁵⁷ Herr Wendriner was, for Tucholsky, the archetypal petty bourgeois – he symbolised Everyman in Berlin: grudgingly acquiescing to republican principles, deferential to authority, eager to avoid provoking anti-Semitic feeling from the right, but otherwise in support of conservative values. Perhaps more unfortunately, Wendriner also typifies the moderate traditionalist who, too preoccupied with his business ('Imperialismus? Gut. Aber nicht die Geschäfte

¹⁵² Kurt Tucholsky, 'Herr Wendriner telefoniert', in Tucholsky, *GW*, vol. 3, pp. 216–217 (p. 217).

¹⁵³ Kurt Tucholsky, 'Herr Wendriner kauft ein', in Tucholsky, *GW*, vol. 3, pp. 486–487 (p. 486).

¹⁵⁴ Tucholsky, 'Wendriner telefoniert', p. 217.

¹⁵⁵ Kurt Tucholsky, 'Herr Wendriner nimmt ein Bad', in Tucholsky, *GW*, vol. 4, pp. 155–156 (p. 156).

¹⁵⁶ Tucholsky, 'Wendriner nimmt ein Bad', p. 156.

¹⁵⁷ Kurt Tucholsky, 'Herr Wendriner erzählt eine Geschichte', in Tucholsky, *GW*, vol. 4, pp. 447–449 (p. 448).

stören.').¹⁵⁸ enabled the rise of nationalistic, fascist ideology, incognisant of the danger posed by right-wing forces in Berlin. The final Wendriner text from 1930 was presciently titled 'Herr Wendriner steht unter der Diktatur'. Though the National Socialists were neither yet in power, nor a dictatorship, the article thematises the increasing presence of Nazis in Berlin after the Reichstag election in September 1930, which saw significant gains for the party and changed the city's *Stadtbild* in very concrete terms. Tucholsky's article reveals how anti-Semitic behaviour was highly visible in everyday life. Regardless of the threat posed to Wendriner, a Jewish man, by the Nazis' open anti-Semitism,¹⁵⁹ he continues to revere figures of authority, convinced that the Nazis represented a lesser risk than the Communists. His obsequiousness is, with the benefit of hindsight, wholly deluded:

Na, ich kann nicht klagen. In unsrer Straße herrscht peinliche Ordnung ... wir haben da an der Ecke einen sehr netten SA-Mann, ein sehr netter Kerl. Morgens, wenn ich ins Geschäft gehe, geb ich ihm immer ne Zigarette – er grüßt schon immer, wenn er mich kommen sieht; meine Frau grüßt er auch. Was hat man Ihnen? Was sagt Regierer? Sie haben ihm den Hut runtergeschlagen? Wobei? Ja, lieber Freund, da heben Sie doch den Arm hoch! Ich finde, wenn die Fahne nu mal unser Hoheitszeichen ist, muß man sie auch grüßen.¹⁶⁰

While, on a macro level, Berlin is where politics take place, Tucholsky singles out the 'small man' whose observations encapsulate the current socio-political mood, and indeed highlight the politicisation of everyday life. The use of dialect underscores Wendriner's status as *vox populi* of his day. Seemingly well-educated but at best only tolerant towards the Republic, Herr Wendriner helps map a specific type of provincialism in Berlin, and is essential to Tucholsky's construction of the city.

¹⁵⁸ Kurt Tucholsky, 'Die Erstaunten', in Tucholsky, *GW*, vol. 4, pp. 116–118 (p. 116).

¹⁵⁹ Tucholsky did not live to see the Second World War and Holocaust, yet he describes the flawed logic of assimilated Western European Jews who believed themselves exempt from the worst of anti-Semitic feelings, while also exposing the kind of rhetoric used at the time. Herr Wendriner, in his last monologue, is an apologist for the Nazis, misguidedly justifying the anti-Semitism towards Eastern European Jews: 'Nu sehn Sie sich mal diesen schwarzen Kerl da unten an! Wahrscheinlich ein Ostjude ... wissen Sie, denen gegenüber ist der Anti-Semitismus wirklich berechtigt. Wenn man das so sieht! Ekelhafter Kerl. Wundert mich, daß er noch hier ist und daß sie ihn noch nicht abgeschoben haben!', Kurt Tucholsky, 'Herr Wendriner steht unter der Diktatur', in Tucholsky, *GW*, vol. 8, pp. 238–240 (p. 238).

¹⁶⁰ Tucholsky, 'Herr Wendriner steht unter der Diktatur', p. 238.

The last Wendriner text expresses Tucholsky's view that Berlin was no longer the anomaly in Germany – a forward-orientated city, capable of resisting anti-urban mentalities and nationalism – but was in fact viewed as ever more representative of Germany as a whole, and at the forefront of reaction. Wendriner, about to leave the cinema after a film screening, is reminded that the audience must join in the singing of the Horst-Wessel-Lied, the anthem of the Nazi party. Ever compliant, he assents to the propaganda without critical reflection on his actions:

Na, gehn wir. Ach so ... noch das Wessel-Lied. Steh auf. Was soll man tun: man muß das mitmachen. Die Engländer singen auch immer nach dem Theater ihre Nationalhymne, na, und wir Deutschen singen eben ein andres Lied.¹⁶¹

The false comparison of the British national anthem, born of a long tradition and altered over the centuries, with a song written one year previously, in 1929, by the Nazi party commander Horst Wessel, underscores Wendriner's gullibility.

What emerges so far from Tucholsky's depictions of Berlin is the resounding impression of oppositions. Berlin is first conveyed as a beacon of cultural enlightenment and progress in comparison with the provinces. This view, however, is gradually undermined by the growth of Berlin's homegrown provincial elements throughout the 1920s, creating opposing forces within the city itself. A further category of contrast exists, namely in Tucholsky's portraits of Paris and, more widely, of France, a country that was, despite later variances in his attitude, generally perceived as more authentic and committed to democracy.¹⁶² Viewing Berlin through the prism of Paris enabled Tucholsky to gain the perspective on his country his compatriots could not,¹⁶³ and his

¹⁶¹ Tucholsky, 'Herr Wendriner... Diktatur', p. 239, p. 240.

¹⁶² See Kurt Tucholsky, 'Der überalterte Parlamentarismus', in *Gesammelte Schriften. Glossen und Essays 1907–1935* <<http://www.textlog.de/tucholsky-parlamentarismus.html>> [accessed May 1 2011]: 'Der französische Parlamentarismus steht turmhoch über dem deutschen, weil er eine saubere und feste Tradition hat, weil der Apparat gut eingespielt ist, weil das echt demokratische Gefühl aller Franzosen den Abgeordneten keine so fundamentalen Dummheiten begehen lässt, wie das anderswo vorkommen soll, und weil niemand da ist, dem er die Stiefel lecken möchte.'

¹⁶³ His commentary from abroad did not always pass without complaint, however. Herbert Ihering, one of the most eminent theatre critics working in Berlin during the 1920s, accused Tucholsky of basking in foreign climes 'während er als "dröhnender Kanzelredner" die soziale Unausgewogenheit der deutschen Verhältnisse beklage und – bar jeder aktuellen Sachkenntnis – ungenaue und auch unzutreffende Bilder des heutigen Deutschland

depiction (and critique) of the city assumes sharper contours in his writings on France.

5.5 Berlin and Paris: Counterspace

In 1924 Tucholsky left what he perceived as the stressful atmosphere of a country in the grips of inflation and moved to Paris.¹⁶⁴ His withdrawal was an act of physical and mental distancing from Germany at a time when 'der politische und wirtschaftliche Druck in Deutschland [...] unerträglich geworden [war]'.¹⁶⁵ His move away from Berlin has a great deal in common with Joseph Roth's departure for the French capital in 1925 after the election in the same year of the conservative former field marshal Paul von Hindenburg as *Reichspräsident*. Tucholsky was increasingly disturbed by the 'kaum noch verdeckte Militarisierung der Öffentlichkeit in Deutschland'.¹⁶⁶ Despite his estrangement from Berlin, and growing concerns about the insufficient impact of his forewarnings, Tucholsky carried on observing 'aus der Distanz die politische, gesellschaftliche und kulturelle Lage in Deutschland [...]'.¹⁶⁷ Paris thus constituted the setting for Tucholsky's continued reflections upon the conditions of Berlin, and presents a type of key to decoding the German capital: Tucholsky 're-reads' Berlin from the vantage point of Paris, and though he rejects Berlin, his accounts from France are suffused with references to Germany and its capital. As Fritz J. Raddatz argues, even in France, 'ist und bleibt [er] der Chronist der Weimarer Republik'.¹⁶⁸

France was perceived by Tucholsky as a calm sanctuary, far from the political environment of Berlin, and the final line of his first poem after arriving in

zeichne.' Herbert Ihering, paraphrased in Dieter Mayer, p. 180.

¹⁶⁴ Tucholsky lived in Paris for two years before returning to Berlin in December 1926 to take up temporarily the editorship of the *Weltbühne*, following the sudden death of the journal's editor and his esteemed friend, Siegfried Jacobsohn. After five months, however, he again became disheartened by the mood in Berlin, and Tucholsky passed control of the *Weltbühne* to Carl von Ossietzky, retreating to France once more. Though he officially resided in France from 1927, Tucholsky's stays in Paris were increasingly infrequent and he continued to undertake numerous lengthy tours of Germany, Switzerland and Sweden. In 1929, he left France and settled permanently in Sweden.

¹⁶⁵ Philippoff, *Kurt Tucholskys Frankreichbild*, p. 1.

¹⁶⁶ Mayer, p. 160.

¹⁶⁷ Mayer, p. 10.

¹⁶⁸ Fritz J. Raddatz, *Tucholsky. Ein Pseudonym. Essay* (Reinbek bei Hamburg: Rowohlt, 1989), p. 70.

Paris, published in May 1924, conveys the sense of relief he felt in leaving Germany behind: 'Ich sitze still und lasse mich bescheinen und ruh von meinem Vaterlande aus'.¹⁶⁹ Akin to a convalescent in the stages of 'recovery', Tucholsky is initially hyper-receptive to his new Parisian environment.¹⁷⁰ After no more than three months he declared that Paris felt more like his home than Berlin ever had.¹⁷¹ In 1928, Tucholsky, in retrospective contemplation of his first week in Paris, admitted to having been overly subjective in his early reports, his reverence wholly generated by feelings of liberation: 'In den ersten acht Tagen ging ich im Taumel umher, die eisernen Ketten der Inflation waren gerade gefallen, und mir war ein Schwergewicht abhanden gekommen'.¹⁷² Early articles attempt to outline his initial impressions of Paris and are notable for his idealised view of the city, which he expresses through antithetical descriptions of Paris and Berlin. In his *feuilletons* 'Paris' (1924) and 'Das menschliche Paris' (1928), for example, Tucholsky explains at length the collective personal qualities he initially perceives as typical of France and its people.¹⁷³ Tucholsky underlines the likeability of both Paris and Parisians, who to him possess an easy charm and warmth, qualities he believed deficient in the German national character, whose disposition he terms 'verdrossen' and 'gereizt'.¹⁷⁴ Humaneness, says Tucholsky, is what lends Paris its 'einzige Atmosphäre'.¹⁷⁵ Parisians are characterised as people who lead *bürgerlich* lives within their means and without fanfare. Perhaps wary of being accused of national stereotyping, Tucholsky cautions against overgeneralisations of Gallic geniality, and not all citizens could be labelled 'Idealmenschen'.¹⁷⁶ On the whole, however, Parisians are viewed as fundamentally distinct from Berlin's pompous Wendriners, and bear all the characteristics of true cosmopolitans by

¹⁶⁹ Kurt Tucholsky, 'Park Monceau', in Tucholsky, *GW*, vol. 3, p. 378.

¹⁷⁰ Tucholsky's elation at having left Germany for France mirrors that of Joseph Roth who arrived in Paris in May 1925 and was also quick to express his excitement about the city. Jon Hughes notes how Roth 'viewed France as an antithesis to Germany, and indeed as the epitome of European culture'. See Jon Hughes, 'Joseph Roth in France', 126.

¹⁷¹ Kurt Tucholsky, 'Ausflug nach Robinson', in Tucholsky, *GW*, vol. 3, pp. 414–416 (p. 416).

¹⁷² Kurt Tucholsky, 'Der Ruf auf der Straße', in Tucholsky, *GW*, vol. 6, pp. 166–168 (p. 166).

¹⁷³ In articles written in France, the term 'Germany' is interchangeable with 'Berlin'; the one signifies the other. Tucholsky, while emphasising numerous times that 'Paris ist nicht Frankreich' (see 'Der Mann, der ein Kind ertränkt', in Tucholsky, *GW*, vol. 6, pp. 291–295, p. 283), nevertheless indicates that the term 'Frankreich' is synonymous with 'Paris'.

¹⁷⁴ Tucholsky 'Paris', p. 380.

¹⁷⁵ Kurt Tucholsky, 'Das menschliche Paris', in Tucholsky, *GW*, vol. 3, pp. 396–399 (p. 396).

¹⁷⁶ Tucholsky, 'Das menschliche Paris', p. 397.

virtue of their 'gelassene Indifferenz'.¹⁷⁷ Eva Philippoff notes how Tucholsky's writings on life in France focus especially on the 'Unterschied zwischen französischem und deutschem Lebens- und Zeitgefühl'.¹⁷⁸ Tucholsky regarded Paris in particular as the embodiment of the real democracy, integrity and culture he sorely missed in Germany. It thus represented a kind of social, cultural and political counterspace to Berlin. His comparisons of Paris and Berlin (and of France and Germany) present not just their dissimilarities but allowed Tucholsky to pass comment on Berlin from afar. In some ways, Berlin comes to represent the 'other', the deviation from that which Tucholsky perceived as the norm. At the same time, his juxtaposition of lifestyles conveys to the German readership that there were other ways of thinking, interacting and, moreover, of living.¹⁷⁹ The markedly different experience of time, place and of people, forms a constitutive element of Tucholsky's depiction of the German capital. His portrayals of Paris in juxtaposition to Berlin attempt to conjure the mood and appearance of the respective cities by depicting the people who inhabit them. In intertwined discourses, observations upon time draw out social characteristics of both cities. These traits are in turn inevitably shaped by place, and by explicit as well as rather more indirect reference, assist in the evocation of Berlin's *Stadtbild*.

Tucholsky's articles from France articulate in a series of individual observations the stark differences between the workings of the Parisian inner clock and the speed governing life in Berlin.¹⁸⁰ He conveys an atmosphere of greater calm, contrary to the image of life in Berlin as unnecessarily harried and lacking what David Midgley terms 'a sense of ultimate purpose'.¹⁸¹ Tucholsky continually varied the theme of the 'accelerated experience of time'¹⁸² generated by industrial modernity in Germany, and especially the obsession on the part of Berliners with the phenomenon of speed, or "tempo". Even before

¹⁷⁷ Tucholsky 'Die Parole', p. 138.

¹⁷⁸ Philippoff, p. 100.

¹⁷⁹ Mayer, p. 223.

¹⁸⁰ The French writer and art critic Léon Werth visited Berlin in 1931 and made an identical observation but with opposite findings: Berliners, he noted, were unhurried, whereas the French were hasty and preoccupied with time: 'Die Franzosen teilen ihre Aktivität nach dem Zifferblatt ein.' See Léon Werth, 'Deutsche Suite – Reisenotizen', in Zimmermann and Rodeck, "Ach, wie gut schmeckt mir Berlin", pp. 161–171 (p. 170).

¹⁸¹ Midgley, p. 275.

¹⁸² Katharina Gerstenberger, 'Historical Space: Daniel Kehlmann's Die Vermessung der Welt', in Fisher and Mennel (eds), *Spatial Turns*, pp. 103–120 (p. 104).

the First World War in 1913, Tucholsky speculated in a treatise on cultural production and reception in Germany on how the nineteenth-century playwright Henrik Ibsen, a man said to be quietly contemplative and whose works required patience, would be received in 'diese[r] Zeit des Raffens, des übereilten Tempos, des Spektakels'.¹⁸³ The historical reasons for Berlin's speed or 'tempo' are located in the rapid urban developments the city underwent after the formation of the German national state in 1871. The dynamic processes whereby Berlin became a major industrial centre with an ever-growing population shaped the city's self-perception. Indeed, Schütz observes that 'speed [...] is in fact *the* central conception Berlin has of itself in the Weimar Republic'.¹⁸⁴ By the 1920s the *Berliner Tempo* had become a literary topos. Bienert notes that the term tempo 'ist nicht einfach gleichzusetzen mit Bewegung und Veränderung; das Wort meint eine Dynamik ohne tragende Substanz, ohne Richtung und ohne Ziel'.¹⁸⁵ Tucholsky repeatedly critiqued 'das sinnlos aufgeschraubte Tempo'¹⁸⁶ of Berliners, their aimless mobility, and the perpetual need for stimulation that was embedded in the idea of tempo: 'Kennen Sie den Berliner? [...] Er will immer Neues haben. Ihm kann es nie schnell genug gehen. Er braucht Abwechslung ohne Sammlung, neue Ziele ohne Mühsal, Reisen ohne Zeitverlust, er ist ein moderner Mensch.'¹⁸⁷ To Tucholsky, the fundamental distinction between the French and the Germans was best illustrated by their individual attitudes towards time:

Wir wollen immerzu ankommen, am liebsten gestern, wir möchten es ganz eilig haben, und wenn es schneller, noch schneller, am allerschnellsten geht, dann bilden wir uns ein, etwas gewonnen zu haben. Der Franzose will leben [...] Und er lebt auch, als ob er tausend Jahre zu leben hätte.¹⁸⁸

Tucholsky, in one of many endeavours to revise some of the preconceived ideas held by Germany about France,¹⁸⁹ points out that the languid pace of the French underscored here should by no means be misinterpreted as indolence,

¹⁸³ Kurt Tucholsky, 'Wenn Ibsen wiederkäme', in Tucholsky, *GW*, vol. 1, pp. 105–107 (p. 105).

¹⁸⁴ Schütz, 'Beyond Glittering Reflections of Asphalt', in Kniesche and Brockmann (eds), *Dancing on the Volcano*, p. 120.

¹⁸⁵ Bienert, *Die eingebilddete Metropole*, p. 69.

¹⁸⁶ Kurt Tucholsky, 'Alte Bäume', in Tucholsky, *GW*, vol. 8, pp. 319–320 (p. 320).

¹⁸⁷ Kurt Tucholsky, 'Der Mann mit den Spritzen', in Tucholsky, *GW*, vol. 2, pp. 68–71 (p. 70).

¹⁸⁸ Kurt Tucholsky, 'Das Stundenkonto', in Tucholsky, *GW*, vol. 8, pp. 176–178 (p. 176, p. 177).

¹⁸⁹ See Kurt Tucholsky, 'Das falsche Plakat von Paris', in Tucholsky, *GW*, vol. 3, pp. 416–419; 'Wie sich der deutsche Stammtisch Paris vorstellt', in Tucholsky *GW*, vol. 4, pp. 341–343.

stating in 'Das falsche Plakat von Paris' (1924) that there was 'wohl kaum ein arbeitsameres Volk als die Franzosen'.¹⁹⁰ The contrast between the leisurely 'Lebensrhythmus'¹⁹¹ of Parisians and the 'Berliner Tempo' finds linguistic expression in the differentiation between verbs in Tucholsky's phrase: 'Paris arbeitet – Berlin schuftet'.¹⁹² The terms 'arbeiten' and 'schuftet'¹⁹³ contain the dimension of time and the respective cities' approach to money-making: the Berliner, Tucholsky implies, perceives himself as toiling or drudging, and 'kommt abgehetzt zu einer Verabredung und etwas zu spät'.¹⁹⁴ Parisians, by comparison, take a more pragmatic approach to their occupation, working longer hours but avoiding hectic and purposeless activity.¹⁹⁵

French attitudes towards time determined both the social and spatial practices of the country's inhabitants, and Tucholsky's articles detail how Parisian equanimity filters down into many areas of public life. He homes in on several examples, which, on the surface, appear rather superficial analyses of French social relations, but in actuality bring into clearer focus criticism he directed at Berlin and the character of its people in various writings over the years (and referred to above). Tucholsky notes how the typical Parisian, aware that he shares his environment with a great many other urban dwellers, fosters civility, which has a bearing on his social behaviour. For Tucholsky the urban settings of Paris' Métro and Berlin's U-Bahn appear particularly symbolic of the more harmonious attitude towards life in Paris. He records:

Die pariser Métro ist stippevoll. In der zweiten Klasse quetschen sich die Leute wie die Heringe – wir Berliner kennen das. Sie hören fast nie ein böses Wort. Es mag wohl hier oder da einmal vorkommen, daß eine ganz leise, ganz höfliche Diskussion anhebt ... Aber die körperliche Berührung gilt hier nicht als eine Beleidigung [...].¹⁹⁶

¹⁹⁰ Tucholsky 'Das falsche Plakat', p. 417.

¹⁹¹ Tucholsky 'Stundenkonto', p. 177.

¹⁹² Tucholsky 'Paris', p. 379.

¹⁹³ The term 'schuftet' is used frequently by Tucholsky to describe this habit of Berliners to view themselves as 'grafters', a notion he dismissed time and again: 'Diese Arbeit ist sehr häufig Flucht und Schwäche'. See 'Ein Deutschland-Buch', p. 224.

¹⁹⁴ Kurt Tucholsky, 'Berlin! Berlin!', in Tucholsky, *GW*, vol. 2, pp. 129–131 (p. 129).

¹⁹⁵ Tucholsky reports on the pleasures of being able to shop later on in the day in Paris, before also remarking on the economic benefit of longer opening hours for employees, see 'Paris', p. 379.

¹⁹⁶ Tucholsky 'Das menschliche Paris', p. 397.

Observing Parisian commuters returning from work, Tucholsky notices that they are ‘müde, aber niemals in ihrer Gesamtheit so verärgert und stumpf, wie wir das kennen’.¹⁹⁷ His confidence that Berliners would relate to his anecdotes – ‘wir Berliner kennen das’ – enhances the impression that the crammed commuter train, filled with irritable passengers (insisting on distance and retaliating if their space was invaded), was a common collective experience of Berliners. The employment of the inclusive ‘wir’ is noteworthy, implying both the regular use of public transport and Tucholsky’s identification with other Berliners, a rare occasion indeed. The same motif appears in Joseph Roth’s articles; he and Tucholsky refer to Berlin’s trams as spaces conducive to conflict: querulous passengers inflict their mood on fellow users and ‘ein unbedachtes Wort – und der Straßenbahnwagen verwandelt sich in eine Tobsuchtanstalt’.¹⁹⁸ Roth, too, reports: ‘Immer liegt die Katastrophe in der Luft’.¹⁹⁹ Both writers point to the passengers of a transport wagon as representing a community (‘Alle Passanten eines Wagens bilden [...] eine Gemeinschaft’),²⁰⁰ thus throwing a light on how dynamics between people – social processes – produce the space and its specific atmosphere. In Berlin’s case, it is one branded by rift and discord. Parisian commuters, though also obliged to stand for lengths of time in close proximity to others, are nevertheless perceived by Tucholsky as ‘Mitglieder einer Familie’²⁰¹ who adopt a strategy of polite tolerance in order to cope with the spatial density in train compartments. French urbanites seemingly have greater intuitive understanding of the city as a place of discipline – based on a tacit acknowledgment of certain rules –, borne out by their conduct in social spaces. They are prepared, as Philippoff puts it, ‘ihren Individualismus dem guten Funktionieren des Verkehrs unterzuordnen’.²⁰² Tucholsky uses the terms ‘Reibereien’²⁰³ / ‘reiben’, and their counterparts, ‘glatt’ / ‘gleiten’,²⁰⁴ to transmit the absence of conflict and friction from French urban modernity, but which he

¹⁹⁷ Tucholsky, ‘Paris’, p. 380.

¹⁹⁸ Kurt Tucholsky, ‘Die Neutralen’, in Tucholsky, *GW*, vol. 4, pp. 440–443 (p. 441).

¹⁹⁹ Roth, ‘Betrachtung’, p. 279.

²⁰⁰ Ibid.

²⁰¹ Tucholsky, ‘Das menschliche Paris’, p. 397.

²⁰² Philippoff, p. 103.

²⁰³ Tucholsky, ‘Paris’, p. 38.

²⁰⁴ Tucholsky, ‘Das menschliche Paris’, p. 399.

discerns all the more in German public life – ‘jeder reibt sich an jedem’.²⁰⁵ In contrast to Tucholsky’s experience of Berlin, Parisians avoid antagonism (‘keine Reibereien’),²⁰⁶ be it in politics, ‘in der Bahn, im Restaurant und im Theater’.²⁰⁷ The city might thus be considered as being comprised of ‘frictionless’ spaces, both literally (fewer physical confrontations in, for example, the context of transport) and figuratively, as social exchanges are felt to be correspondingly amicable. Tucholsky accentuates French insouciance, and how unlike Paris his home city is in attitude, by comparing their diplomatic approach to disagreement (‘Die Gegner versuchen, einander zu überzeugen’)²⁰⁸ to the impulse of the German to assert himself wherever possible: ‘Die Deutschen sind mit Offensivgeist getränkt. Der Aufwand an Radau steht meist in gar keinem Verhältnis zur Sache – aber das Prinzip, das Prinzip muss durchgefochten werden.’²⁰⁹ Similar to the ways in which Roth depicts Berlin as a city afflicted by disease (to its politics and populace), Tucholsky here alludes to the ‘defective’ organism of Berlin. The Parisian system, by contrast, appears healthy and functioning.

The confrontational social relationships that apparently existed between Berliners suggest that the city underwent a different process of what Bienert terms ‘innere Urbanisierung’.²¹⁰ The phrase alludes to Georg Simmel’s concept of the modern urban psyche. Writing in 1903, Simmel diagnosed nonchalance and stoicism among metropolitans as they attempted to cope with what Fritzsche describes as ‘modernity’s temporal regime’.²¹¹ Personal interactions were characterised by punctuality and a fixation on time, because:

[...] durch die Anhäufung so vieler Menschen mit so differenzierten Interessen greifen ihre Beziehungen und Bethätigungen [*sic*] zu einem so vielgliedrigen Organismus ineinander, daß ohne die genaueste Pünktlichkeit in Versprechungen und Leistungen das Ganze zu einem unentwirrbaren Chaos zusammenbrechen würde.²¹²

²⁰⁵ Tucholsky, ‘Die Neutralen’, p. 441.

²⁰⁶ Tucholsky, ‘Paris’, p. 382.

²⁰⁷ Ibid.

²⁰⁸ Ibid.

²⁰⁹ Tucholsky, ‘Die Neutralen’, p. 441.

²¹⁰ See Bienert, *Die eingebildete Metropole*, pp. 72–78 (p. 72).

²¹¹ Peter Fritzsche, *The Turbulent World of Franz Göll: An Ordinary Berliner Writes the Twentieth Century* (Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2011), p. 25.

²¹² Simmel, p. 16.

Tucholsky's articles tell of the different pulse of Paris, whose social life and physical substance had undergone a more gradual process of change and modernisation compared to Berlin. The German capital entered the throes of industrial modernity relatively late compared to both Paris and London, and, as Wolf Jobst Siedler remarks:

Berlin mußte sich ja tatsächlich immer wieder neu entwerfen, wo doch Paris und London stets dieselben blieben. Die Kurzatmigkeit der politischen Geschichte Berlins steht hinter seiner architektonischen Atemlosigkeit und der Zerrissenheit seines baulichen Gesichts.²¹³

At the same time, Berlin's emphatically accelerated pace, its tempo, shaped behaviour, and 'wird als Synonym gebraucht für den Großstadtverkehr, für den beschleunigten Informationsfluss und technische Leistungen – und es bezeichnet die Mentalität und die Lebensweise der Großstädter'.²¹⁴

Tucholsky describes how opposing speeds and mentalities are reflected not only by the cities' social element, but are also inscribed in the cityscapes of Paris and Berlin: buildings are the manifestation of their respective temporal and mental dispositions. Since the latter half of the nineteenth century, the general perception of Berlin had been that it was devoid of a stable civic character, owing to the city's exponential growth during the *Gründerjahre* and beyond. Since the seventeenth century successive waves of migrants had arrived in Berlin 'from Slavic countries and from Western Europe as well as from elsewhere in Germany',²¹⁵ and changed the city's social composition and appearance. As a result, Berlin's *Stadtbild* had routinely been described as lacking in notable architecture, and notoriously provisional in its outer form.²¹⁶ The harmful nature of the 'Berlin tempo' revealed itself in the frequent demolition and reconstruction of its architectural forms, and in 1924 Tucholsky diagnosed Berlin as a city suffering 'die Krankheit der Renovierungssucht'.²¹⁷ In 1920 he had already remarked how Berlin was 'immer wieder von vorne

²¹³ Jobst Siedler, *Phoenix im Sand*, p.109.

²¹⁴ Bienert, *Die eingebildete Metropole*, p. 72.

²¹⁵ Midgley, *Writing Weimar*, p. 267.

²¹⁶ Such observations were widespread in literary depictions of Berlin in the early twentieth century. Karl Scheffler in his 1910 polemic, *Berlin. Ein Stadtschicksal*, uttered the now well-known observation about the city's tendency 'immerfort zu werden und niemals zu sein'. See Karl Scheffler, *Berlin. Ein Stadtschicksal* (Berlin: Fannei & Walz, 1910, repr. 1989), p. 219.

²¹⁷ Tucholsky, 'Das konservative Paris', p. 457.

anzufangen geneigt [...]'.²¹⁸ By contrast, his portrayals of Paris convey a city that has undergone a different ageing process. Merely in terms of aesthetics, Tucholsky finds 'das gesamte äußerliche Bild [...] schöner als in Berlin: Architektur und das Licht der hellen Tage geben einen zarten Glanz'.²¹⁹ Whilst Berlin's urban development purportedly lacked a precise narrative, Paris is identified as 'eine Stadt des "Noch"',²²⁰ in which a pronounced sense of tradition and culture prevail, even taking into account Haussmann's modernisation of Paris in the previous century.²²¹ Moreover, tradition in France is celebrated: 'hier lebt sie; Tradition und Kultur leben, es leben Geschichte, Erinnerung und das Wirken vergangener Geschlechter. Hier fängt keiner für sich immer wieder ganz von vorn an'.²²² He reports how, over time, demographic groups relocated within the city, and the borders of Paris shifted repeatedly, each process leaving traces in the present-day Paris – akin to a palimpsest –, which shape its urban form. The city becomes a metaphor for cultural-historical strata:

Alle diese historische Vorgänge haben Schichten auf dem pariser Boden abgelagert, es sind Spuren zurückgeblieben, manche nur in der Straßenkonstruktion feststellbar, und alle zusammen ergeben eben eine feste Tradition.²²³

Tucholsky observes a similar layering of time in Berlin, and the three phases in the city's history since 1871 – 'das alte gute Berlin, das Berlin der Gründerjahre und das wilhelminische, das kriegereiche Berlin'²²⁴ – are easily locatable if one knew where to search.²²⁵ The difference is, however, that, unlike Paris, which always remained authentically 'pariserisch',²²⁶ irrespective of physical alteration, Berlin lacks historical continuity in terms of its buildings, which

²¹⁸ Tucholsky, 'Das Gesicht', p. 759.

²¹⁹ Tucholsky, 'Paris', p. 380.

²²⁰ Tucholsky, 'Paris', p. 381.

²²¹ George-Eugène Haussmann was a civic planner who was commissioned in 1852 by Napoléon III to modernise Paris. The urban redevelopment overseen by Haussmann between 1853 and 1870 was on a grand scale and included the creation of large public spaces, wide boulevards, and long, linear avenues.

²²² Kurt Tucholsky, 'Der Ruf auf der Straße', p. 168.

²²³ Tucholsky, 'Das konservative Paris', p. 456.

²²⁴ Tucholsky, 'Das Gesicht', p. 436.

²²⁵ Tucholsky's allusion to 'das alte gute Berlin' ought not be taken at face value, however. A more sincere sentiment is expressed in his article 'Köpfe' from 1929, which states: 'Die gute alte Zeit hats nie gegeben. Die schlechte neue? Allemal.' See Kurt Tucholsky, 'Köpfe', in Tucholsky, *GW*, vol. 7, pp. 36–37 (p. 37).

²²⁶ Tucholsky, 'Das konservative Paris', p. 457.

prevented the crystallisation of urban spaces into lasting formations that would survive the vicissitudes of history. This perception was commonplace in the early twentieth century, with Kracauer also inferring Berlin's ahistoric nature from its rapid urban renewal. The lack of tradition in urban design resulted in a city Tucholsky described in 'Alte Bäume' (1930) as possessing 'tausend Gesichter und keines. Kein einheitlicher Wille eines großen Städtebauers gibt dieser Stadt Glanz und Profil'.²²⁷

Tucholsky addressed the social and cultural implications of Berlin's inconsistent character in his early Berlin writings, labelling it a 'Kolonialstadt'²²⁸ inhabited by a populace that originated from 'Posen oder Breslau'.²²⁹ He reiterates the concept of Berlin as a colonised space in the late twenties, critical of the city's eagerness to embrace outside influences whilst supposedly negating itself: 'Diese Kolonialstadt hat ein bißchen viel Österreich in sich aufgesogen und Prag, allerhand Landsleute aus dem Reiche, die ihm erzählen, wie es sich aufzuführen habe. So wird die Luft sachte verfälscht'.²³⁰ He believed this receptivity reflected a self-consciousness borne of an inadequate collective identity. In his writings from France, Tucholsky describes the adhesive function of the French sense of shared (historical, literary and architectural) traditions, which imbued citizens with an easy confidence. He termed them a 'Nation von »déjà vu«. Sie haben alles schon einmal gehabt'.²³¹ Berlin and its inhabitants, on the other hand, lacked the assurance that conventions confer, which in turn accounted for their compulsion to emulate other cities: "'Wie" New York wollen sie sein. Und "wie" Paris. Und wie ich weiß nicht was alles – statt erst einmal sie selber zu sein'.²³² Berliners were in danger of overlooking their own city's inherent qualities, so preoccupied were

²²⁷ Tucholsky, 'Alte Bäume', p. 320.

²²⁸ Tucholsky, 'Das Gesicht der Stadt', p. 437.

²²⁹ Tucholsky, 'Berlin! Berlin!', vol. 2, p. 129. Tucholsky's reference to the real origin of Berliners was not merely stated with facetious intent but, to some extent, corresponded to reality. By 1900, the majority of Berliners had indeed moved to the city from small towns or villages in Brandenburg or East Prussia. This accounted for Tucholsky's perception of Berliners as inherently parochial; they retained their 'provincial' roots. See Fritzsche, *A/s Berlin zur Weltstadt wurde*, p. 47.

²³⁰ Tucholsky, 'Die Weiße mit'm Schuss', p. 67.

²³¹ Kurt Tucholsky, 'Deutsche und französische Naivität', in *Gesammelte Schriften. Glossen und Essays 1907–1935* <<http://www.textlog.de/tucholsky-naivitaet.html>> [accessed 16 May 2011]

²³² Tucholsky, 'Die Weiße', p. 67.

they with focusing on and attempting to imitate Paris and London. For Tucholsky these pretensions demonstrated the differences between 'Weltstadt' Paris,²³³ and the 'Weltstadtsehnsucht' of Berlin.²³⁴

The key characteristics that Tucholsky thought typical of the Berliner (obstinacy, unawareness, parochialism) were thrown into sharper relief by geographic distance. The perspective from France aided especially his recognition and understanding of Germany, its people and their failings: 'wie viele Deutsche im Leben unendlich weit von Humanität entfernt sind [...] merken wir erst im Ausland'.²³⁵ Tucholsky's antipathy towards his compatriots was particularly pronounced when these were journeying abroad (in his article 'Spaziergang' from 1925 Tucholsky quips about having to write a letter to an acquaintance who is threatening to visit him in Paris, in which he will claim that he has passed away).²³⁶ The 'Aura des Berliners'²³⁷ was a permanent presence even on his travels abroad and in several satires portraying the Berliner on holiday, Tucholsky repeatedly locates the city in its inhabitants. For example, Herr Wendriner, on holiday in Paris, brings with him his everyday cares, his overbearing manners and tendency to compare everything to his home city: 'Die Lichtreklame fand ich ja nicht so aufregend. Ich meine, das haben wir in Berlin auch.'²³⁸ Meanwhile, Tucholsky reflects on why even well-travelled individuals fail to internalise some of the character of the places they have visited:

Der Berliner ist bekanntlich einer der schlechtesten Zuhörer – er will selber. [...] Und ich habe mich immer gewundert, warum weitgereiste Berliner so gar nichts von ihren Reisen mit nach Hause bringen ... Jetzt weiß ich es. Sie hören nicht zu. Wenn die Sonne über dem Meer untergeht, wenn einer singt und eine tanzt, wenn Paris silbrig leuchtet [...]. Der Kerl hört nicht zu.²³⁹

Tucholsky's representation of the Berliner suggests that the city shapes the way in which its citizens perceive the world around them; Berlin's character imposes itself on their perception of foreign physical surroundings. They live in

²³³ Tucholsky, 'Paris', p. 378.

²³⁴ Bienert, *Die eingebildete Metropole*, p. 96.

²³⁵ Tucholsky, 'Die Neutralen', p. 443.

²³⁶ See Kurt Tucholsky, 'Spaziergang', in Tucholsky, *GW*, vol. 4, pp. 101–104 (p. 101).

²³⁷ Tucholsky, 'Spaziergang', p. 101.

²³⁸ Kurt Tucholsky, 'Herr Wendriner in Paris', in Tucholsky, *GW*, vol. 4, pp. 431–433 (p. 432).

²³⁹ Kurt Tucholsky, 'Berliner auf Reisen', in Tucholsky, *GW*, vol. 4, pp. 324–326 (p. 325).

a city of millions, yet Berliners are seemingly incapable of being outward looking: 'Berlin ist so groß: es hat vier Millionen Einwohner. Berlin ist so klein: auf Reisen sieht der Berliner nicht über den Spittelmarkt.'²⁴⁰

Even the French provinces fare better by comparison to the city that in 1924 Tucholsky termed 'Dorf Berlin':²⁴¹ 'Die Leute noch in den kleinsten Städten sind viel großstädtischer als die Berliner, die sich noch so viel einbilden.'²⁴² Tucholsky's *Ein Pyrenäenbuch* (1927) is a collection of reports that describe in episodic fashion his journeys through western France and the Pyrenees. The affection with which he portrays Paris is transposed to the French countryside, which is celebrated and evoked through explorations of churches, cemeteries, monasteries, and small Pyreneean towns. Joseph Roth two years earlier had praised in euphoric tones the 'humane Landschaften'²⁴³ beyond Paris, and produced a comparable travel journal of his visits to diverse French towns with 'Die weißen Städte' (1925).²⁴⁴

Tucholsky's publication contains few direct judgments of the contrasts between countries but the chapter of the *Pyrenäenbuch* titled 'Französische Provinz' provides the context for a comparison of certain features of the provinces in France and Germany. Their different relationship to time re-surfaces as one of the main distinctions. The small French towns evoke the memory of slow Sunday afternoons, and Tucholsky reiterates the inhabitants' leisurely way of life. They take their time to *live* life: 'Die Leute in der französischen Provinz rennen nicht. Sie leben.'²⁴⁵ Tucholsky defines the majority of provincial towns as attractive places that are conducive to life, unlike the egregious and dark rural communities described in his articles on the German provinces: 'In fast allen Pyrenäenstädten herrscht eine weiche, geruhlsame Luft, besonders in den hübschesten unter ihnen, die am Anfang der Ebene liegen – freundlich geht es da zu.'²⁴⁶ Tucholsky's depictions of French rural regions also suggest that the relationship between the city and the provinces cannot be understood simply in dualistic terms. France is not

²⁴⁰ Tucholsky, 'Berliner auf Reisen', p. 326.

²⁴¹ Kurt Tucholsky, 'Dorf Berlin', in Tucholsky, *GW*, vol. 3, pp. 443–446.

²⁴² Tucholsky, 'Die Neutralen', p. 442.

²⁴³ Joseph Roth, 'Brief aus Paris', in Roth, *Werke*, vol. 2, pp. 551–552 (p. 551).

²⁴⁴ Joseph Roth, 'Die weißen Städte', in Roth, *Werke*, vol. 2, pp. 451–506.

²⁴⁵ Kurt Tucholsky, 'Ein Pyrenäenbuch', in *GW*, vol. 5, pp. 7–135 (p. 126).

²⁴⁶ Ibid.

polarised into two camps: the modern capital in opposition to the reactionary provinces. The inhabitants of small towns in France are shown to be distinct from Germany's 'Kleinzeitler'. Though geographically remote from the hum of social and cultural centres, provincial settlements are nevertheless described as pleasant and, moreover, receptive rather than reactive to outside forces of modernity: 'Es sind freundliche Städtchen, und man ist gern in ihnen. Liegen sie weit entfernt vom Brausen der Welt? Aber das ergreift sie ja mit.'²⁴⁷ At the same time, Tucholsky calls attention to the political influence of the French provinces. Like German non-urban communities, they had the potential to sway parliamentary election outcomes. The difference was, however, that – unlike the threat posed by the forces of reaction to the Republic in Germany – the French provinces had a left wing which in 1924 had effected a shift to the left in the election: 'hier in der Provinz [ist] der große Umschwung in der parlamentarischen Politik des Landes vorbereitet worden'.²⁴⁸

Tucholsky's *feuilleton* articles written in France make repeated references to French liberalism, highlighting the country's anti-war stance and the absence of militarism. He observes in complimentary tones: 'Nie auch die leiseste Bewegung gegen die Fremden, niemals ein auch nur passiver Widerstand gegen deutsche Laute. Das interessiert sie gar nicht. Sie wollen in Frieden leben.'²⁴⁹ This differentiated it from what he perceived as the growing nationalism and xenophobia in Germany, which he consistently criticised from France.²⁵⁰ Tucholsky's *Pyrenäenbuch* concludes with his return from the countryside to Paris. Here, he salutes Paris in a direct address with a lengthy, emotional profession of gratitude and love.²⁵¹ After acknowledging that Paris

²⁴⁷ Tucholsky, 'Pyrenäenbuch', p. 127.

²⁴⁸ Tucholsky, 'Pyrenäenbuch', p. 126.

²⁴⁹ Kurt Tucholsky, 'Der 14. Juli', in Tucholsky, *GW*, vol. 4, pp. 164–167 (p. 167). See also Tucholsky, 'Paris', p. 382: 'Das Volk will keinen Krieg.'

²⁵⁰ See, for example, Kurt Tucholsky, 'Was nun –?', in Tucholsky, *GW*, vol. 4, pp. 106–109; 'Der Takt der Soldaten', in Tucholsky, *GW*, vol. 6, pp. 76–77; 'Gesunder Pazifismus', in Tucholsky, *GW*, vol. 6, pp. 87–90; 'Das zweite Heer', in Tucholsky, *GW*, vol. 6, pp. 240–247.

²⁵¹ In the same year that Tucholsky declared his love for Paris (1927), he issued the afore-quoted rejection of Berlin: 'Ich liebe Berlin nicht. [...] Ich liebe diese Stadt nicht, der ich mein Bestes verdanke; wir grüßen uns kaum'. Meanwhile, Tucholsky's emotional outpouring for Paris echoes Gabriele Tergit's gratitude towards Berlin, also expressed in 1927 in her article 'Liebeserklärung an diese Stadt': '[...] nehmen Sie Dank, daß wir hier leben dürfen'. Tergit, 'Liebeserklärung', in Tergit, *Blüten*, p. 31.

was neither, for him, the setting for numerous life-defining moments, nor his native city, he affirms that Paris was nevertheless his 'emotional' home:

Danke, daß ich in dir leben darf, Frankreich. Du bist nicht meine Heimat [...] Ich habe deine Kinderverse nicht auswendig im Kopf [...]. Nicht bei dir bin ich verliebt durch die Straßen gelaufen [...]. Und doch bin ich bei dir zu Hause.²⁵²

5.6 Conclusion

Tucholsky's portrayals of Berlin suggest different conceptions of the city. It was initially praised for resisting the influence of the provinces – which are a synecdoche for the prevailing mentality of militarism and nationalism in Germany – and represented a relatively progressive cultural and social space. Later, however, the urban / rural binary – the sense of two spaces in permanent opposition – is dissolved, as Tucholsky draws attention to Berlin's pretentiousness, and to the fact that bigotry and nationalism are not the preserve of the provinces but are on the rise in the capital itself. What is notable is that Tucholsky spatialises the era by means of "Berliner Typen": the prototypes of Herr Wendriner, petty bureaucrats, marching *Stahlhelme*, and Nazis, are the materialisation of traits Tucholsky regarded as representative of the interwar city and the times. He situates these figures in familiar places in Berlin — on the Kurfürstendamm or at Spittelmarkt, in Steglitz, in the cinema or theatre, thus localising parochialism and politically bankrupt mind-sets.

A central aspect of Kurt Tucholsky's mapping of Berlin is his tendency to convey the times through the use of particular kinds of (abstract) space. Tucholsky sets the city – in its entirety – against a variety of geographical foils, in this instance, the overall spaces of both the German provinces and Paris. Though there are few immediate references to topographical features within Berlin, the city is defined by its differences from, and, later, its similarities with, the provinces and the French capital. Tucholsky identifies Berlin primarily with political aspects, and concludes that there was no 'new city' after the First World War, which rationalises the allure of Paris: it represented an escape from German politics. Tucholsky's portrayals of Paris, though they romanticise the

²⁵² Tucholsky, 'Pyrenäenbuch', p. 134.

city and are prone to platitudes, are nevertheless instructive in revealing what he regarded as Berlin's shortcomings. In contrast to Parisians' tolerance and lightness of being, Tucholsky's Berlin articles collectively transmit the image of a city deficient in humaneness, and instead abounding with social and political conflict. Above all, Berlin is "made up" of, and defined by, its inhabitants and the political Zeitgeist, both of which Tucholsky locates precisely.

CONCLUSION

Berlin *feuilleton* articles from the 1920s and early 1930s have received little consideration to date in terms of their geographical dimension. One of the key aims of this thesis has been to draw attention to the role of geography and cartography in *feuilleton* articles, which engage with Berlin and provide different kinds of narratives of the era through spatial representation. It has highlighted the writings' emphatic spatiality, and argues that the analysis of depictions of interwar Berlin in spatial terms, and the mental maps that result from such study, engender new perceptions of the city and the Weimar period. Here, I have demonstrated the productivity of spatial theory as a mode of investigation for the *feuilleton* article. The close spatio-temporal relationship that characterises the texts makes them an ideal medium for a spatial reading: *feuilletons* "write" the times – they reflect on, and offer insight into, the post-war world –, and this thesis illustrates how the authors do so by means of reference to, or representation of, specific kinds of space. From the topographical division of Berlin evident in Joseph Roth's articles; to the portrayal of the city as abundant with spaces interlinked with personal experience in Gabriele Tergit's *feuilletons*, to the rendering in Kurt Tucholsky's writings of Berlin as a space defined by politics: the category of space emerges as *the* means by which the city is depicted and given structure on the page.

The spatial turn allows us to read *feuilleton* publications anew: by focusing on aspects of space (in terms of both physical forms and more abstract, imagined spatial constructs) the texts are opened up to a range of geographical models and concepts from urban studies, such as architecture, location, mapping, mobility, environment, transcendence of borders, territorial oppositions – centre (city) versus periphery (country) –, division along specific borders and boundaries (real or imagined, socio-economic or political in nature), and allocation of space. Space, as I have shown, is essential in the authors' narration of history, society, and the political status quo in the Weimar Republic. Karl Schlögel reminds us of the 'Räumlichkeit aller menschlichen Geschichte':¹ how history always plays out in physical space, and how the location can in turn

¹ Schlögel, p. 9.

increase our comprehension of historical experience. All three authors are significant in this context because of their deployment of space to depict the period. Tergit recounts personal history, both her own and potentially that of her readers at the time, by drawing on space. In Roth's writings we can see how the effects wrought by the war (poverty, exile, right-wing violence) are formulated spatially. Similarly, Tucholsky charts what he sees as Germany's political failings by invoking the overall space of Berlin (complete with its inhabitants), and judging it against Germany's provinces and France.

What has emerged strongly during the course of this project is how the study of the corpora of the authors' journalistic works, rather than the selective reading of individual *feuilleton* articles, presents us with a far more accurate picture of how contemporaries responded to the Weimar period. In particular, this approach enables us to discern recurring concerns or programmatic issues pursued by the authors; their respective attempts to understand the post-war city, and their particular ways of 'seeing time',² as Andrew Piper calls it. Most importantly, the comparison of the three authors and their oeuvres provides us – to use a spatial metaphor – with new "co-ordinates" on our mental maps of the interwar city. The authors foreground marginal, personal and political spaces in Berlin. They combine the geographically traceable with imaginary – because subjective – constructions of space in their mappings of the city, producing what Edward Soja, in his re-evaluation of Lefebvre's tripartite conceptualisation of space, terms 'thirdspace' — a hybrid that merges the dualities of concrete and physical space, and abstract and imagined space.³ Roth, Tergit and Tucholsky generate alternatives to the cartographies manifested in the collective imaginary; their maps diverge from the clichéd depictions of Weimar Berlin that draw on 'mythical' sites to evoke the period or conflate Berlin with, for example, Babylon, the 'new city', or the Golden Twenties. A spatial reading of their *feuilleton* articles allow us new ways of seeing Berlin, a city we might have regarded as definitively categorised in and by literary representations, and closed to new interpretations.

² Andrew Piper, 'Mapping Vision', in Fisher and Mennel (eds), *Spatial Turns*, p. 32.

³ Soja Soja's 'thirdspace' is based on Lefebvre's concept of "spaces of representation". Soja views 'thirdspace' as a mixture of 'the abstract and the concrete, the real and the imagined, the knowable and the unimaginable, the repetitive and the differential'. See Edward W. Soja, *Thirdspace: Journeys to Los Angeles and Other Real-And-Imagined Places* (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 1996), p. 57.

The depictions of Berlin in the *feuilleton* articles of Roth, Tergit and Tucholsky are driven by individual concerns or preoccupations that differ in each case, affecting their maps in key ways: Joseph Roth was, in his own (self-ironic) words a ‘unmoderner Humanist’⁴ from an impoverished Jewish background. His observations of Berlin after the First World War are made with an eye on the past as a means of evaluating (and critiquing) conditions in the present. And though Roth views Berlin as representative of social and political malaise after the war – he repeatedly returns to the theme of marginalisation to convey the city’s harmful aspects – his texts neither moralise, nor do they offer instructions for improvement (unlike Tucholsky’s). Moreover, Roth is not interested in an intellectual reading of the times, preferring to convey in compassionate terms the privation of ordinary Berliners to a readership largely unversed in such matters. There is a clear correspondence between the critical stance Roth adopts towards the altered times after the war and how this is expressed in his depictions of Berlin in spatial terms. We can read into Joseph Roth’s *feuilletons* a form of spatio-social mapping, the geographic division of Berlin into different topographies: concrete spaces of neglect and privilege (these are precisely situated); political space defined by pro-monarchy architecture and right-wing expression; the temporal space of exile inhabited by Eastern Jews. These spaces materialise what Roth regarded as the reality of the interwar period: physical hardship and a lack of agency, social division and disarray, and political unrest and brutality.

Roth’s concerns overlap to a large extent with those of Kurt Tucholsky, yet the writers’ maps transmit their respective unease in different ways. Like Roth, Tucholsky expresses hostility towards the post-war era in Germany, and the only place both writers feel empathy and longing for is France and its capital. Roth and Tucholsky regard Berlin as the epitome of post-war problems, although Roth places more emphasis on the social crisis in the wake of the war, while Tucholsky addresses primarily political issues. In the same way that Roth continually draws attention to Berlin’s political atmosphere and social underside, Tucholsky’s journalism is also motivated by a particular impulse, which is to warn readers in Germany of the political and human catastrophe he observed lurking beneath the fragile democracy of the Weimar Republic. He played a key

⁴ Joseph Roth, ‘Der Bizeps auf dem Katheder’, in Roth, *Werke*, vol. 2, pp. 55–57 (p. 56).

role in helping to elucidate the times through continual observation and critique of the post-war city. In Tucholsky's *feuilletons*, Berlin as a whole is used to illustrate the political shortcomings in Germany, though he rarely employs the explicit topographical representations that mark the portrayals of Roth and Tergit. Instead, Tucholsky maps Berlin by more abstract means, namely by comparing and contrasting the city and its people with the broader environments of Paris (and its inhabitants) and the German provinces. The spatial dialectics of inside and outside are of key importance in this respect. By the time of the early 1930s, one can discern how Tucholsky renounces Berlin, viewing it as a menacing political environment characterised by parochialism and political ignorance that facilitates growing National Socialist ideology. He maps this notion onto Berlin – indeed, he identifies and situates right-wing activity in Berlin throughout the 1920s –, and thus suggests that the perception of Berlin as a 'new city' after the First World War is problematic, even without the benefit of hindsight.

Gabriele Tergit's cartographic rendering of Berlin is guided by different ideas to Roth's and Tucholsky's. Her map more than any other depicts Berlin as spatially diverse, whilst Roth's and Tucholsky's maps are rather more homogenous – though they also present more complexity – in spatial terms as a result of the two men's programmatic approach to portrayals of Berlin. Tergit stands out as a writer who neither renders the post-war city explicitly in terms of references to social or political issues, nor attempts to shine a light on the wider picture of post-war German society. Hers are comparatively apolitical, animated impressions of daily life in Berlin. She makes reference to concrete landmarks and sites of personal significance, engages with Berlin as a whole – the relationship between space and identity formation is shown to be of key importance –, as well as with its individual topographical components. Tergit produces what we might term a micro-geography of the everyday, highlighting the spatiality of life. What emanates strongly is her subjective awareness of the city, and her local view, which addresses and appeals to the local reader. The map of Berlin that is designed by Tergit comprises a range of recognisable, because *real*, urban spaces that have personal significance for her and would also attract the metropolitan readership. By the same token, her fast paced urban snapshots mirror the era's pre-occupation with speed whilst perhaps indulging readers' perceptions of themselves as city dwellers. In this sense,

Tergit can be seen to be contributing towards a specific image of the times she was portraying, though she passes over paradigmatic *Großstadt* features in Berlin and largely avoids the ‘feuilletonistische Inszenierung’⁵ highlighted in Chapter 2.

By re-assessing *feuilleton* articles on the basis of the spatial turn, this thesis has endeavoured to advance *feuilleton* scholarship and to contribute to spatial discourse in relation to literary analysis. Further areas of interest have arisen as a result of my findings thus far. These include the re-evaluation of other authors in light of this spatial approach. My particular focus would be on the *feuilleton* articles by other female Weimar journalists whose oeuvres have not yet been exploited more fully (Erika Mann, Irmgard Keun, Annette Kolb, Marieluise Fleißer, and the lesser known Bertha Badt-Strauss). There has been a rise in interest regarding German *feuilletonists* and journalism in general in the last several years. In addition to the recent edited volume *Schreibende Frauen: Ein Schaubild im frühen 20. Jahrhundert*,⁶ which concentrates on women journalists of the Weimar era (Keun, Schwarzenbach, Leitner), an additional publication on *German Women Journalists*,⁷ edited by Christa Spreizer, is forthcoming. Given Gabriele Tergit’s own fictional portrayal of a woman journalist working in Berlin in the early 1930s in her novel *Käsebier erobert den Kurfürstendamm*, a spatial analysis of other literary portrayals of the female experience of the interwar city, as well as how these contributed towards the construction of urban “reality” in Weimar Berlin, would be a worthwhile and timely investigation.

Another aspect that merits further exploration is *Städtevergleiche* in the *feuilletons* of the Weimar period, especially those between Berlin, Vienna, and Paris. While the interaction between the German and Austrian capitals in the interwar years has received scholarly attention,⁸ there remains scope for a focused examination of the depiction in spatial terms of the city–province dichotomy in Austria, and how these relate to portrayals of provincial life in interwar Germany and France. In this context, the Austrian-Jewish journalist Anton Kuh (1890–1941) warrants attention. Kuh, whose *feuilleton* articles

⁵ Jäger and Schütz, *Städtebilder*, p. 36.

⁶ See Gregor Ackermann, Walter Delabar (eds), *Schreibende Frauen. Ein Schaubild im frühen 20. Jahrhundert*, Juni. Magazin für Literatur und Kultur, 45 / 46 (Bielefeld: Aisthesis, 2011).

⁷ The volume *German Women Journalists* is due to be published by Peter Lang in 2012 / 2013.

⁸ See *Vienna meets Berlin: Cultural Interaction 1918-1933*, ed. by John Warren and Ulrike Zitzlsperger, and *Städtebilder zwischen Literatur und Journalismus. Wien, Berlin und das Feuilleton der Weimarer Republik*, ed. by Christian Jäger and Erhard Schütz.

remain under-researched to date,⁹ moved to Berlin from Vienna in the mid-1920s and wrote for numerous journals and newspapers (*Die Weltbühne*, *Das Tage-Buch*, *Prager Tagblatt*). A comparison of Kuh's writings on the new Vienna after the First World War (and its relationship with Austria) with Kurt Tucholsky's descriptions of Berlin and Paris, and their respective provinces, would help to determine parallels or differences in perception. Kuh noted the advance of anti-urbanism in Vienna after the collapse of the dual monarchy and the city's decreased geographical boundaries, which effectively cut it off from the rest of Austria.¹⁰ He frequently articulated his fear of creeping provincialism in depictions of the increasing urban / rural divide in Austria. Pursuing research relating to Kuh's (and other Austrian authors') representations of the antagonism between the provinces and the city – Vienna and the country –, and reading his works within a spatial context to establish how social and political developments in Austria at the time are indicated through space, would be an extremely rewarding endeavour.

⁹ There exist only three edited volumes of his *feuilleton* writings. See Anton Kuh, *Luftlinien. Feuilletons, Essays und Publizistik*, ed. by Ruth Greuner (Vienna: Löcker, 1981); Anton Kuh, *Zeitgeist im Literatur-Cafe. Feuilletons, Essays und Publizistik*, ed. by Ulrike Lehner (Vienna: Löcker, 1985); and Anton Kuh, *Jetzt können wir schlafen gehen! Zwischen Wien und Berlin*, ed. by Walter Schübler (Vienna: Metro, 2012).

¹⁰ See Anton Kuh, 'Wien am Gebirge', *Die Stunde* 1, July 4, 1923, 3, quoted in Lisa Silverman, *Becoming Austrians: Jews and Culture between the World Wars* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012).

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